

TOTAL!

100% FOR ALL PLAYERS OF
NINTENDO

- NES
- Game Boy
- Super NES

A totally independent mag from Future Publishing

NINTENDO KICK OFF!

NES and Game Boy players will be 'over the moon' with this amazing footy game!

April 1992
Issue 4
£1.95

It's a mag of three halves - NES, Game Boy and Super NES. Miss this and you'll be as sick as a parrot!

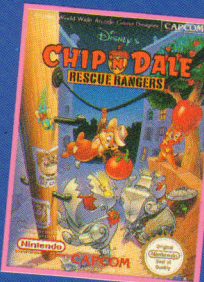
More than
100
games
reviewed
and rated!
Including:



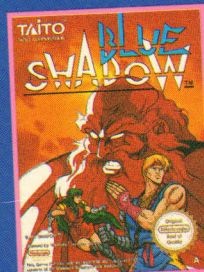
WWF!



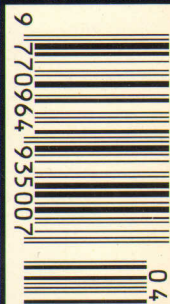
Bart!



Chip 'n Dale!



Blue
Shadow!



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We visit Super Mario World on the Super NES!

THE COMPUTER GAMES OLYMPIAD 1992

What Is It? For the first time ever, Amiga game players are invited to take part in the first multi format games competition with the chances to win prizes and the coveted best games player award.

What Else Can You Win? Awards will be given for style, gameplay and high scores. Prizes will be given both at regional and final levels and will include International Holidays including trips to Disneyworld, £10,000 Cash prizes, Computers, and Computer Games. Each entrant will also be given a certificate of attendance stating their position gained and the overall rating given by the adjudicators. Due to our unique system, every one in four entrants will be winners.

Where Is It? As much as possible we have tried to keep travel down to a minimum. On the right is a list of towns which will all have regional heats. Any other towns or areas that have a large registration count will also be included in the regional heats. The finals will be held in London at Wembley on the 25th September 1992.

VENUES

Aberdeen
Bath
Birmingham
Bournemouth
Brighton
Bristol
Cambridge
Cardiff
Dover
Edinburgh
Exeter
Glasgow
Gloucester
Guildford
Hereford
Hull
Leeds
Leicester
Lincoln
Liverpool
London N/S/E/W
Luton
Maidstone
Manchester
Middlesbrough
Newcastle
Northampton
Norwich
Nottingham
Oxford
Perth
Plymouth
Preston
Salisbury
Sheffield
Shrewbury
Southampton
Stoke-on-Trent
Taunton
York

ARE YOU A PLAYER?

How Do You Enter? Easy, just fill in your registration card below and send it with your registration fee to the Olympiad Committee at the address below before the final registration date May 1st. On receipt of your application all your details will be placed into our competition database and your entrance number and ticket will be despatched to you as well as a complimentary spectator ticket for a friend. On May 4th you will be sent confirmation of the date of your local regional heat and the venue.

Which Category Will You Be In? Categories will be by computer or console type, age, and game type.

What Games Do You Compete On? For the regional heats you choose your three favourite games and will compete on at least two. For the finals you will be offered a new choice of combat weapons.

How Will The Competition Work? For maximum enjoyment each round will include competing both against other competitors as well as the computer or console itself. All entrants are guaranteed at least 20 mins gameplay. Each region will produce 20-25 winners to go on to the finals.

Are There Any Limitations To Entrance? Yes. There will be a maximum of 10,000 competitors. The minimum age for entrants is 13.

Where Can I Get More Information? Call either of the registration Hot Lines for more details.

DO YOU DARE?

THIS FORM CAN BE PHOTOCOPIED

THE OLYMPIAD COMMITTEE,
SPIKE ISLAND ~ 7, ESSENDON,
HERTS. AL9 6JF

OLYMPIAD 1992 REGISTRATION FORM

REGISTRATION HOT LINE:
MON-FRI 8AM-6PM (0707) 665980

Computer or Console make: Amiga/Atari/Nintendo/Acorn/PC/Sega Model: _____

Title: Mr/Miss/Mrs _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Daytime Tel No: _____

Evening Tel No: _____

Age: _____ Occupation: _____

Right or Left handed: _____

Top 3 Favoured Games

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Hi-Score / Level

Preferred times to Play: Evenings/Weekends (Leave blank if either time is acceptable).

Please find enclosed my cheque/Postal Order for the sum of £10.00 made payable to Barclay Computer Services Ltd in respect of my registration fee with the Olympiad Committee for the 1992 Computer Games Olympiad.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

TOTAL!

April 1992
Issue 4

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NINTENDO ■ NES
■ Game Boy
■ Super NES

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Do you give two hoots about the general election? I think not. You want Nintendo news, like the fact that the SNES is coming early. Quick! Page 4.

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You know what it looks like but do you know how it works? We tell you all about the techy stuff!

SUPER MARIO WORLD 16

One of the most impressive games ever made gets bundled with the SNES. Read our full review to see exactly what you'll be getting. You lucky things.

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Miss the latest issue of TOTAL and your friends and family will disown you. Don't be a sad little wretch. Subscribe and get it delivered each month.

NEXT MONTH 82

You haven't even read this one yet have you? I dunno, talk about impatient. Oh go on then, turn to page 82 to see what May has in store for you.



Party time at Bowser's, and you're all invited. Page 16.



Kick Off - Fab or what? It's on page 24, footy freaks.



Bart's horrific holiday gets reviewed on page 50.



Look for the logo. It shows you our fave games of the month.

Creditty rolley bit! Again!

It may not take very long to read these magazine things, (you're reading this bit faster than I typed it for a start! Slow down or your eye's will go wibbly!) but it does take an awfully long time to put them together. Honest! Below are listed all the people who put in the hours and hours of work to produce this, er, tawdry little rag.

Editorial (Keyboard-bashers)

Things looked at then reviewed and rated by:

Number 1 Steve 'Stroppy' Jarratt

Number 2 Andy 'Dim-o' Dyer

Prod Ed Rachel 'With it' Collinson

Art (Mouse-pushers and deserters)

Simple text files made stupidly huge by:

Number 1 Wayne 'Baggy' Allen

Number 2 Vicky 'Piste again' Mitchard

Advertising (Ten pages? No sweat!)

Even more ads than last month taken down the market and flogged by:

Advertising manager

Simon 'Tetsuo' Whitcombe

Production Pathetic things like 'Er, well, um... It's like this Tracy. There was this big problem, um, and we haven't, uh, been able to do any work because of it!' listened to calmly by:

Co-ordinator Tracy 'O' O'Donnell

Illustrations (Picture peeps)

Drawings and photos were done by:

Cover Gary 'Quick' Slater

Characters Mike 'Swot' Roberts

Photography Ashton 'Flashon' James

Contributors

Absolutely everything was done by Thicky, Baldy and Baghead, straight up, no kidding. Ouch! All right, Stuart Campbell helped. Ow! Yes, yes and Neil West. Thwack! Ooyah! OK, it's a fair cop, Julia O'Shea, Sally Meddings, Jacque Spanton, Lam Tang and Rod Lawton did their bit too.

Linotronic operators

Obscenely large files messed about with for far longer than is morally correct by:

Number 1 Jerome 'The' Clough

Number 2 Simon 'RIP's' Windsor

Number 3 Chris 'knackered' Stocker

Very important people

Sweeping changes set into motion just to make things more 'interesting' for us by:

Publisher Steve 'Fairy' Carey

Group publishing director

Greg 'Er...' Ingham

Circulation director

Sue 'J.R.' Hartley

Production manager

Judith 'Mo'dith' Middleton

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TOTAL TALK

The Eagle has landed!

Flight sim specialists Microprose are just putting the finishing touches to F-15 Strike Eagle on the NES, Game Boy and Super NES.

This aged air-combat game has been brought bang up to date with a series of missions in the Middle East, culminating with an air strike against Baghdad. F-15 will be kicking up a (desert) storm on a Nintendo near you later this year.



You'll soon be wiping bogies off your NES with F-15!

Never die on NES again!



Looks weird but does the job - Game Genie could be saving your life soon!

into the NES game deck. Because it's 'intelligent' (hence Thicky won't be allowed anywhere near it), the Genie can read the data on the cart and change the gameplay.

That means you can have infinite lives or energy levels, jump higher, or even introduce special effects. This doesn't alter the game or harm the cart at all - it just allows you to carry on playing until you drop! Phew!

Sources say there'll be a Game Boy version in Britain by this summer and one for the Super NES by Christmas time.

Game Genie is not manufactured, endorsed or distributed by Nintendo.

Ever got to a really tricky bit on a game and wished you could have just a few more lives? Well soon you'll be able to cheat like crazy, thanks to a nifty little device called the Game Genie.

The Genie plugs into the NES cartridge and the whole lot is slotted

I'm so Dizzy!

Nope, it's not a Vic Reeves game for the NES, but a version of the incredibly popular computer game, Dizzy.

British software house Code Masters have sold zillions of copies of their Dizzy platform adventures and NES gamers will soon be able to savour the delights of this egg-shaped hero when The Fantastic Adventures Of Dizzy - and a whole sackfull of other Code Masters games - appears around September time.

In one of those typically complex (and rather dull) licensing deals, Code Masters games will be appearing on the Camerica label and distributed through Hornby (the model train people).

The first batch of games to hit UK stores will also include The Ultimate Stuntman, Micro Machines and Big Nose The Caveman.

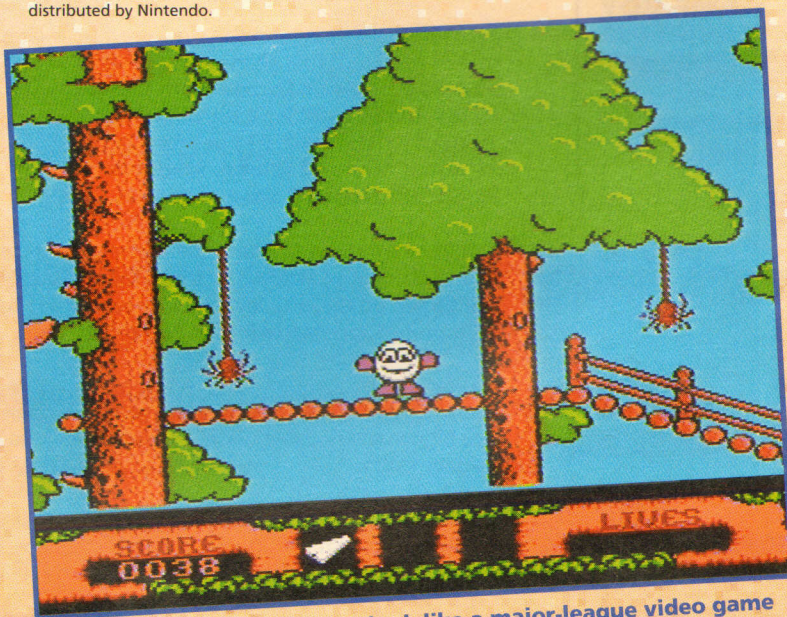
TOTAL TEASER!

Here's a little something we've conjured up for you.

SUPER NES FANS READ ME!

At long last it looks like a final release date for the Super NES has been set. Anyone wanting to get a slice of this stonking 16-bit action should get them selves down to the high street on Saturday 18 April! The SNES will probably be a sell-out, so don't hang about!

The little piccy on the left is a portion of one of the screen shots in this issue. If you can find which game it's for, write the name down on the back of a postcard or envelope and send it to: TOTAL Teaser, 29 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2DL. The first correct entry out of the box wins that NES game. And don't worry if you have a Game Boy, we'll send you a GB cart instead. OK?



This rotund little chap doesn't look like a major-league video game superstar does he? Well, this guy's been in more games than Thicky's had hangovers. And believe me, that's an awful lot!

'The Doc's dead and my girl's all cut up about it!'

Following the success of Dragon's Lair, Elite are about to release a new Game Boy title, Dr Franken.

The evil Dr Von Frankenbone created Franky and Bitsy, two lovable monsters, from spare body

parts. The Doctor has died and the evil creatures that inhabit his castle have stolen Bitsy and taken her apart. As Franky, it's your job to roam around the castle, collect all the bits and re-assemble her!

Apparently the programmers have used a clever scrolling technique to keep screen-blur to a minimum. Whether it works or not remains to be seen, but as the screen shots show, the graphics

look pretty amazing.

The castle you explore has a staggering 230 rooms, but the cart has a password option so you can restart the quest where you left off. Expect a full review next ish!



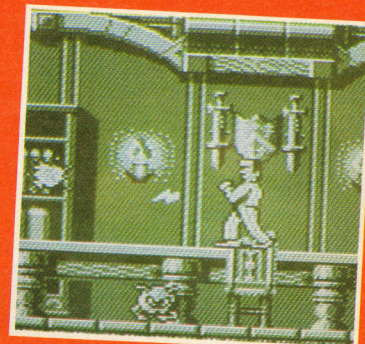
'Oh, yeah, sure it's all yours!' On zombies' bath night, Franky decides that being dirty is preferable to being dead.



Up on the roof, Franky finds it difficult telling which things are monsters – and which things are bits of his girlie.



'Ooh! There's nothing like a sudden bolt of several million volts to make you feel like a new man!' Er... yes Frank.



Oh dear – Franky-boy's got a nasty case of electrical discharge. Still, it stops the nasties from getting too close.

Dizzy on the NES is much the same as it's home computer counterpart, only better. It's a massive arcade adventure in which the egg-shaped hero rolls and somersaults through forests, caves, pirate ships and castles while collecting objects and solving puzzles.

The Dizzy games have already gone down a storm on other formats and won various awards, so hopefully we're in for a treat.

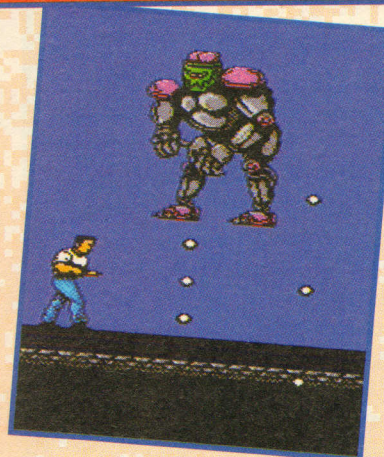
Micro Machines is also supposed to be a bit of a stonker – it's already sold over 100,000 copies in America and been voted most fab-o-brill NES game of the year (or something).

Basically, it's a race game in which you guide a variety of weeny little

motor cars around normal, everyday obstacles. Like in the breakfast table race you have to avoid cups, saucers, bits of old bacon-rind and so on.

The Ultimate Stuntman has an intriguing mix of gamestyles including driving, platform shoot 'em up and Spiderman-style wall climbing. From what we've seen, it's certainly not lacking in playability and the graphics are big 'n' colourful.

And finally there's Big Nose The Caveman. We've only seen a few screen shots at the moment, but this scrolling platform game looks like it has some decent cartoon graphics, if nothing else. Look out for reviews of all these carts later in the year!



Here's The Ultimate Stuntman, moments away from being the ultimate dead-person.

It's a Miracle!

Someone's won a piano teacher!

Yes indeed, we had some appalling entries, so it's a miracle *anybody* won! But in the end we had to make a decision, so the winners are:

Toby and Heidi Koehler from Longwell Green in Bristol

These two won with a punchy hip-hop, rappy, skiffle, big band, house, acid, jive, rave, classical, pop sort of track. It goes a bit like this:

T, O, T, A, L – that spells TOTAL
T, O, T, A, L – that's the word (repeat a couple of times)

T is for tips – you get them on every page...

Yes, well you get the idea.

If you missed the compo in issue 2, these guys have won a Miracle keyboard: a dead smart full-size keyboard that plugs into your NES and comes with a cartridge which actually teaches you to play!

We thought it was stonkingly fab-o-brill, so if you have a musical bent and have £250 to spare, give Mindscape a call on 0444 246333.

Lights! Game Boy! Action!



Feeling sorry for 'bleary-eyed Game Boy players', Euromax Electronics have come up with (yet another) nifty little device to help you see your Game Boy on those dark nights.

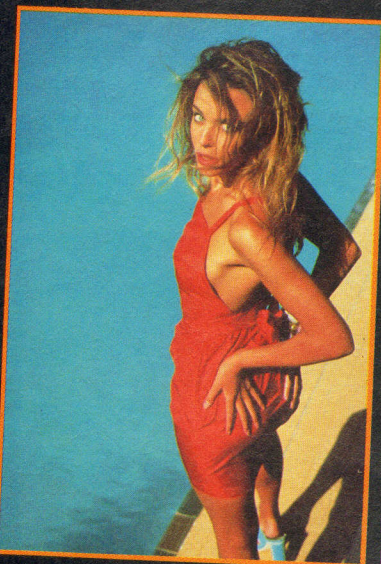
The Beeshu Magnilight is an illuminated magnifier which snaps on to the top of the unit without cutting off access to the hand-held's controls.

However, it's a tad on the bulky side, and with a 9V battery inside, makes the Game Boy top heavy.

Still, for only £16.95 you get a clearly lit screen and some bicep-building weight training into the bargain.

STAR GAMERS

We've been amazed at the number of famous hipsters that spend their free time twiddling Game Boy buttons. We thought we should let you know which stars play on the world's favourite portable game system. TOTAL's 'Search for Star Gamers' begins...



Famous Nintendo Gamer Number 1 Kylie Minogue

'Our Kylie' as the TOTAL team lovingly refer to her, has been bashing the Game Boy's fire buttons for about two years now. As you can imagine the world's best hand-held helps to while away those long intercontinental air trips in between concerts (poor thing).

Her fave game is Tetris (no surprise there) and it's obvious that her gameplaying antics have influenced her family, because her baby sister also plays - who? Who else...

Famous Nintendo Gamer Number 2 Dannii Minogue

... Yep, that other Minogue also has a hand-held - although she hasn't been playing for as long as big sis has. Again, Tetris is the favoured cart, (which is a shame, 'cos if the two weren't several million miles apart most of the time they could have a decent head-to-head).

Still, the meandering Minogues like to keep in touch and swap tips over the phone. Heck! Rather than pick up the bill than us, that's for sure.



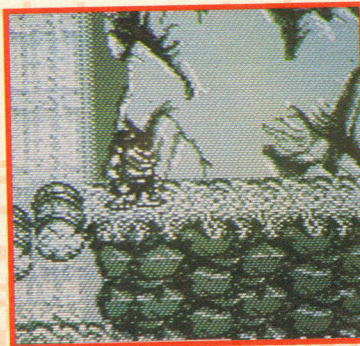
Portable primitive arcade action!

Quick! Go and have a look at the review on page 34. Did you like what you saw? Well if you're a Game Boy owner with a lust for lizards, you'll be glad to know that Caveman Ninja will be available on your favourite hand-held within a couple of months.

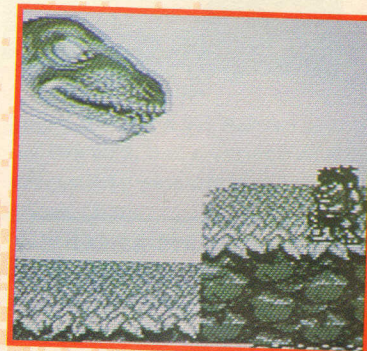
As you can see from the screen shots, the GB's graphics look almost identical to the NES game, so full

marks there. And although the gameplay on the NES version left a little bit to be desired, the programmers have managed to squeeze all the vertical scrolling sections into this version, so it could be even better.

Still, it's best not to speculate too much, so be sure to keep an eye on forthcoming issues of TOTAL and we'll bring you the full review as soon as possible.



Things are nice and quiet for our Caveman Ninja because the baddies aren't in the cart, yet...



... Ah. Well, *some* of them are. As you can see, the dino-bosses are just as big as on the NES!

Yo! It's kickin'!

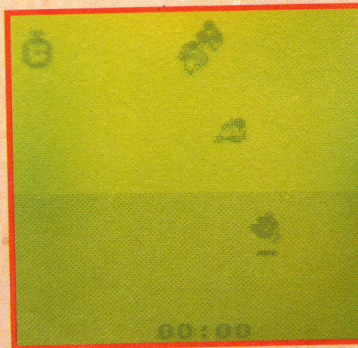
Anyone who's seen Kick Off on any machine anywhere would probably scoff loudly at the phrase 'Kick Off on the Game Boy'. 'Ha! Scoff!' they would go.

But no. For Anco have attempted the impossible and, believe it or not, they have succeeded (more or less). We only had an early 'doctored' version to play with, but it was all there - scrolly pitch, weeny players, good

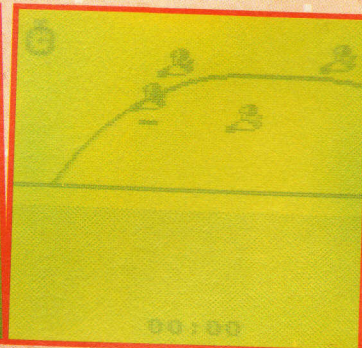
ball movement (ahem), the lot.

Hopefully we should get a finished version to put through its paces soon. Until then, take a gander at the piccies below.

And here's a little story that Anco enjoyed telling us. When they showed NES Kick Off to the big 'N', their head programmer stared in disbelief and said that it wasn't possible to do that on an NES! Believe it, guys! Believe!



Where's the flippin' ball gone again? Eh? Whassgooinon? Why are we all runnin' around when there ain't no ball? Oy, ref, what happened to the flamin' ball then eh...?



... Well son. It's that Thicky dweeb taking the pictures. Every time he presses 'pause' the ball disappears. Just keep runnin' around so's you look good in the mag!

TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES II THE ARCADE GAME™

Thrilling new adventure with the Turtles

Lovely April O'Neil has been abducted once again by the repulsive Shredder and his Foot Clan. The Turtles take up the hunt. Sparks really begin to fly in eight action-packed areas of Manhattan!

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Hero Turtles II:
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LETTERS!

Next best thing to suicide

Prize letter!

WRITE ON!

This dude's won some CRAP!

Dear TOTAL,

I am writing this letter of complaint at Nintendo's suicidal plans for release of the Super NES. In America, the sales for the SNES are neck-and-neck with the Sega Genesis. In Britain there is a complete

army of Mega Drive users, I unfortunately

am one of them. But when I first read that the SNES was being released here weeks earlier than planned, I quickly decided I was going to buy it, especially at the knock-out price, and set about selling my Mega Dross to get a SNES.

To my dismay I have now read in the Daily Mirror's TV Weekly (February 8) that the SNES is going to be released in the beginning of May with only five games! That is very limited and is too little to make people buy the SNES.

According to the article, a Sega spokesman had also said that Nintendo have 'missed the boat'.

Well Nintendo may have got a speedboat with the SNES, but they will need to fuel it properly to overtake the massive lead of the Mug-o-Drive. This fuel must consist of a brilliant advertising scheme that shows what the SNES can do.

Also, there must be lots more games on release with the machine, such as Final Fight, Super Ghouls and Ghosts, UN Squadron and Pilot Wings.

Finally, they should release it earlier say, mid March or April, so as not to keep people waiting.

Jean-Paul Sampson
Tottenham

Dear Jean-Paul,

Don't worry so much! True, five games isn't a lot, but how many are you going to buy in one go? This little lot costs nearly £250! I think you'll find new games appearing pretty swiftly once the SNES has a decent user base. The SNES was released in the US about seven months ago, and there are almost 90 titles available for it already!

As regards their advertising campaign, I'm sure Nintendo will do the business - their ads for the Game Boy and NES carts have been pretty hot, so the SNES ones should be well worth looking out for.

STEVE



The Super NES, will it catch the Sega (boo! Hiss!) Mug-o-Drive?

Holey Game Boys, Batman

Dear Thicky,

Please tell me what the little hole next to the contrast dial on my Game Boy is for, and is there actually anything to plug into it?

Please could you also tell me about a game called Crazy Faces. My friend bought it from another friend and it looks like it is home-made, or something.

David Cox
Addlestone

Dear David

You haven't been reading your Game Boy manual have you? That little hole is where you can plug in a mains adapter, to save on batteries. There are a couple of adapters on sale at the moment, including Nintendo's rechargeable



Playing at home? Then plug in a Nuby and save yer batteries

battery pack and a neat little mains adapter from Nuby. I've never heard of Crazy faces (but it sounds like Steve stars in it).

Thicky

Chessmaster RIP (sniff!)

Dear TOTAL,

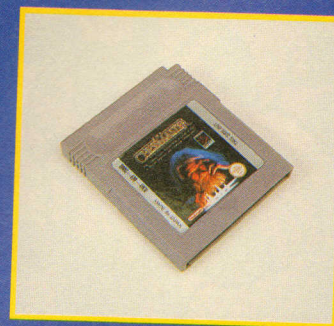
After you reviewed Chessmaster for the Game Boy (from Software Toolworks) in the first issue of TOTAL, I tried to obtain it but couldn't, so I contacted Bandai who said it is no longer available.

I checked in your second issue to see if you had pointed this out, but no, you still showed the review from the first mag. I would like to say at this point that the mag is great. But make sure of the availability of the games you review.

Alan Clarke
Birmingham

Dear Alan,

I don't understand this. Chess is a perfect game for the Game Boy, and Chessmaster is a brilliant chess game. We've had lots of



The Chessmaster - gone to the big cart maker in the sky

people phoning up wanting to buy it - so why delete it?

We left the review in TOTAL Recall, just in case there were still some units left in a few shops. But you're right, and if you turn to the TOTAL Recall sections you'll find it's now deleted!

STEVE

Weird places I've played my Game Boy (Numbers 1 & 2)

Number 1
From Tividale

Steve Jarratt
Age Huge

Fave Game Super Mario Land



"Pay for new light bulbs?! Not when there's a perfectly good roof to play on!"

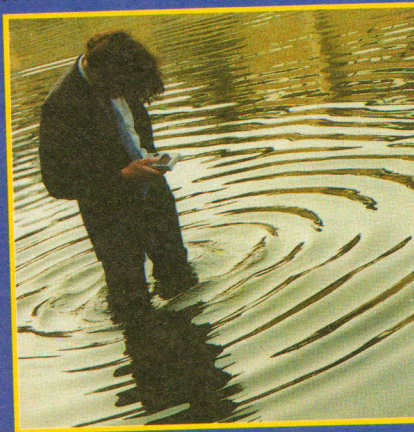
Have you ever played your Game Boy anywhere completely daft? Well if you have, and have a picture to prove it, write in and tell us at TOTAL, Future

Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW!
We'll print your letter and show the picture so you get to be really, really famous all over the whole

Number 2
From Bristol

Andy Dyer
Age Less than 'im!

Fave Game Tetris



"Huh, the roof's nuthin'. When my batteries are running low I put on my suit and stand knee-deep in cold water. Why? Well, that's a good question. Erm... errrrr... EEEEEEEEEEE..."

world! You'll probably not be able to go shopping anywhere ever again and you'll be just like those stupidly famous 'n' groovy popstar dweebs. P'raps.

Price Wars

Dear Baldy,

Like you, I am Nintendo mad and was wondering if you would answer these questions:

- 1** Will there ever be a converter to play NES games on the Super NES?
- 2** Is there a release date for The Immortal on the UK NES as it is currently available in America?
- 3** What are the best role-playing games on the NES?
- 4** Is Star Wars worth £50?

Carl McCarthy

Manchester

P.S. Give Thicky a big punch in the gob because he is really getting on my nerves.

Dear Carl

1 Unfortunately, no – the Super NES just plays Super NES games. But if you do buy the 16-bit machine, the best thing to do is hang on to your old NES.

There will still be plenty of good NES games worth buying and



Is Star Wars worth £50? A good game, yes, but nothing's worth going bankrupt over. May the price be with you, as we say!

that way you get the best of both worlds, don't you?

2 Can't help you there. Games that are released in America might come out over here in a few weeks' time – or they may never appear at all.

3 Erm, tricky one that. Acclaim's Swords And Serpents is very good – and you can play it with friends if you use the Four Player Adapter. Battle Of Olympus is pretty smart too. Both the Zelda games are good, but they're a bit

slow if you prefer a lot of action in your games. Still, any of these will do the job!

4 Ah, well. That really depends on what you think of the game. I enjoyed playing it, but to be honest, I think £50 is asking a bit much – let's face it, you can get SMB3 for £10 less than Star Wars. It really depends on whether you feel you can spare that cash!

Baldy

P.S. It'll be a pleasure!!

UK into US don't go

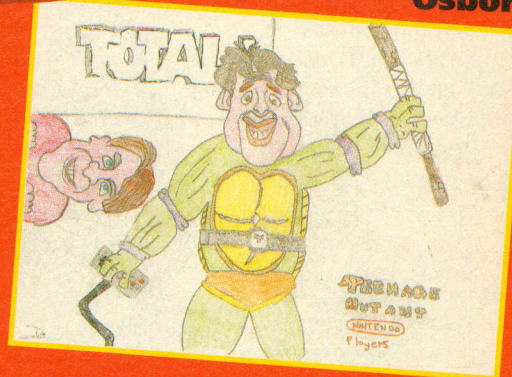
Dear TOTAL,

I think your mag is a brill Nintendo guide. I'm borrowing my nephew's at the moment, but I'm going to America in May and I'm going to twist my mum's arm to buy a Super NES for me. The big question is, do English games go into the American Super NES?

Jason Robinson
Carnforth

Number 1
From Jonathan
Brighton

Number 2
From David
Osborne



Thicky – a man of many faces and, it appears, a rather extensive wardrobe. Indeed, we're deeply worried about Andy's dressing up habits, if you get my drift. And I can tell you, it's not just Terminator and Turtle rags he's into. I MUST agree with David about the mutant bit though! **STEVE**

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5 They're both very, very good games. Super Mario 4 has some snazzy features, but that's only because it's on a more powerful machine. In the gameplay stakes, both are superb! **STEVE**

Do you feel the need for more speed?

Dear Steve & Andy,

I am a Game Boy holder and have just seen the Movie Top Gun. I was wondering if there's a Top Gun game for the Game Boy?

James Chisholm
Doncaster

Dear James,

There's no Top Gun game for the Game Boy (yet) even though there are two on the NES. The next best thing is F-15 Strike Eagle which is due later this year.

STEVE

The money of colour

Dear TOTAL,

I am debating whether to buy a Game Boy. Do you think it's worth waiting for the colour Game Boy? If so, is it worth extra money for the colour?

When the colour Game Boy comes out how much do you think it will cost roughly? Will you be able to play old Game Boy games on the new Game Boy and also will you be able to link them together (the green one together with the colour one).

Robin Stammwitz
Lindfield

Dear Robin,

How many times do I have to say this, eh??! The colour Game Boy is at least two years away from even being on sale in this country, and they will be compatible, OK?

STEVE

This guy's all keyed up

Dear Steve & Andy

First of all may I say that TOTAL is totally brilliant.

Secondly, I have a few questions.

1 Is there a keyboard (with letters and numbers) available to connect up to my Nintendo?

2 Approximately how many games are there available for my NES?

3 How much will Super NES cart's cost (roughly)?

No-name
Selby

Dear no-name,

1 Yes if you live in Japan. No if you live in the UK. **STEVE**

2 Phew! Er, more than 20. About 56 I'd say. Perhaps 200. Maybe less. **THICKY**

(Oh dear.) Actually, there are nearly 120 NES games available. But we advise you don't go and buy them all at once on your Mum's credit card!! **STEVE**

3 The Super NES will cost £150 to you (give or take a few pence), and a whole lot more to Thicky! **STEVE**

All right you lot! You've been writing to us in droves and that's great. But here's your next quest: WE WANT PHOTOS OF YOU TOO - just to see how ugly you are. In fact if you're uglier than Thicky you can 'ave his job!

WRITE AND BE DAMNED!

Keep 'em coming! We've had thousands of letters from you and we're letter junkies, so don't stop. Ask us anything you like and we'll do our best to give you a sensible answer. Send your words of wisdom to: That Miserable Old Geek, or Thicky at:

TOTAL! LETTERS
Future Publishing
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2BW

Sega games on NES!? You're flippin' crazy! (Or too thick to tell the difference)

Dear TOTAL,

I love your magazine. Just three questions:

1 Are you going to do a sports game feature (ice hockey, basketball, american football etc)?

2 Are Speedball and Golden Axe released or the NES?

3 Why do you rave so much about the Super NES? I

mean, I know its the greatest console in the history of man (and woman, I'm not chauvinistic!), but I got a NES for Christmas, so all this hype doesn't do much for my belief that I've got a brilliant machine (which I think I have).

Tony Edgar
Co. Antrim

Dear Tony,

1 Might do. And then again...

THICKY

2 WAAAAARGH! What are you on about? They're Sega games! Anyway, Golden Axe is deadly dull (and not a patch on Final Fight for the Super NES). However, Acclaim recently



Speedball on your NES? Wake up! It's just a nightmare!!

bought Mirrorsoft, the software house responsible for doing the Speedball games, so it's just possible they might produce a version of Speedball for the NES or Super NES. **STEVE**

3 We rave about the Super NES because it's new and exciting and pretty darn fab. But there's no doubt who's still the boss for the time being. The NES didn't become the biggest selling games machine because it looks nice (which is debatable anyway). No, it's a fantastic games machine - and don't worry: it's still selling in bucketloads so there's plenty of life in the old console yet! **STEVE**

4 Oh. There isn't a question 4 is there? **THICKY**

US Super NES mess! (Eh! Pardon! You what?)

Dear TOTAL,

After reading your piece on the Super NES, me and my brother have decided to buy one together when we go to America, and there are a few things I would like to know.

1 My friend told me that in America they have a different power supply, so I could not play it in England. Is this true? And if so, would I need it to get it adapted?

2 How much does a Super NES cost in America?

3 How much do Super NES games cost in America?

I hope to see lots more reviews on the Super NES in future issues.

Marc Lindley
Redhill

Dear Marc,

1 Listen mate, don't bother with the yank model. It won't work over here and it looks vile. Besides, you'll only

have to wait a few more weeks and you can buy one here!

THICKY

2 The Super NES costs \$180 in the States, which is about £105 (roughly). But then if you buy one abroad and ship it over here, you have to pay import duty. So you can slap on another £20 or £30 right away. **STEVE**

3 We've seen games advertised from \$30 for a naffo sports sim and up to \$64 for a sprawling RPG. In UK dosh this is anything from £17 to about £38. But when they appear over here, you can bet your bottom dollar (groan) they'll start at about £40. **STEVE**

You can bet we'll be covering all of the Super NES games as soon as they are released over here, perhaps even sooner - so don't go wasting your money on anything until you've read the TOTAL reviews! **STEVE**
Yeah! **THICKY**

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Jerry Boy	£45
Jap/Am. Converter	£15

HARDWARE

Super NES (Scart)	£190
Gameboy	£65

You wouldn't believe what's goin' on in F-Zero!

F-Zero is the slickest, smoothest, fastest 3D race game we've ever seen. It's also just a teensy bit clever, too...

The parallax scrolling scenery is produced using a different graphics mode (probably mode 2). To do this, the sneaky programmers switch graphic modes part-way down the screen.

The entire 3D roadway is generated using mode 7. A graphic background (16 screens by 16 screens big) is simply scrolled, distorted and rotated to produce realistic movement.



The stunning depth-cued graphics are created using the SNES's colour addition feature which is used to give the illusion of transparency. Here, strips of transparent blue grow darker and darker as they approach the horizon to create the effect of great distance.

The flashing power track and moving city light are all produced by simply cycling colours within the same pixel.



This is a ten-picture sequence showing the Pilotwings hanglider going through its paces. The landscape is generated using mode 7 again

LET'S TALK ABOUT SPECS BABY!

Ever wondered just what goes on inside the Super Nintendo Entertainment System? Well here's your chance to find out - read these SNES hardware specs and baffle your mates with your amazing technical knowledge!

THE BRAINS OF THE OUTFIT

Ask a techie person and they'll tell you that real brains of any console is its central processing unit (CPU) - the heart of the machine that does all the calculations and 'runs' the game.

The CPU's speed is based on the 'number of cycles per second' it can perform which is rated in Megahertz (MHz). Every operation takes a certain number of cycles to carry out - for instance a complex calculation will take quite a few cycles to solve.

At the heart of the Super NES is the 65sc816 CPU which is rated at 3.58 MHz (that's 3,580,000) cycles per second. Impressed huh? Well don't go overboard because for a 16-bit chip it's actually quite slow: Sega's Mega Drive 68000 chip runs exactly twice as fast at 7.16 MHz, and SNK's Neo Geo runs at a zippy 14 MHz!

Surely, then, if the SNES has been released with a slower maths engine than other competitors on the market, that's serious bad news for the new Nintendo console?

Well, yes and no. Of course, Nintendo would have done everyone a favour by slapping in a faster CPU. But because different chips do different things in different ways, a slow clock speed isn't necessarily a complete disaster.

True, some SNES games do suffer 'slow down' when there are too many sprites on screen, but

Roll it, twist it, turn it, love it! Mode 7 makes it look easy

Whether you want to wobble a platform, spin a cylinder or move a stonking great island, the SNES's custom hardware does it all...



Konami's Castlevania IV features stunning use of mode 7 backdrops. This scene moves as if you were inside a rotating tube!



The very first Koopa kid you meet in Super Mario World sits on top of a see-sawing platform floating in a pool of lava. To kill the little geek you have to keep bashing him on the head (or hitting him with fireballs) until he topples off the edge and gets a good sizzling!



The platform is a mode 7 graphic rotated from side to side. Because you can't have any other backgrounds in mode 7, the scenery is kept black (it rotates too, but you can't see it). Everything else on screen is made of sprites – including all the status display and the lava!



and moves incredibly smoothly. The only limitation is that you can't perform a loop the loop – but when it looks this good, who cares?

real play quality depends mostly upon careful design and programming. Super Mario Land 4 – the game which comes bundled with the SNES – is brimming with action but doesn't slow down at all!

Nope, it's a console's custom-designed chips, not the CPU, which provide some of the most impressive sounds and pictures.

Fortunately the SNES is packed to the gills with custom hardware, specifically the graphics processor, which is the beast that handles everything you see on screen. This chip has seven graphic modes enabling programmers to choose how many backgrounds and colours they want to use.

The SNES's screen is made up of individual dots called pixels (picture elements). Graphics are split between backgrounds (the scrolly bits) and sprites (the whizzy moving-around bits). The backgrounds are displayed using character blocks – groups of 64 pixels in an 8 x 8 square – because they can be stored as one byte in memory, which saves room and speeds up graphics processing. The screen is split up into 896 (32 x 28) character blocks.

These backgrounds can be scrolled in any direction and the SNES can show up to four independently scrolling backgrounds at one time (although you'll normally see only two or three).

If it's colours you're after, the SNES has an impressive selection – 32,768 to be precise. But, of course, handling this much colour is a bummer – you can't possibly keep referring to individual

colours from the master palette: you'd need a 15-digit binary number for each one.

The SNES can only show a maximum of 256 colours at any one time, so instead the programmer groups the colours he wants to use into smaller palettes of 16 colours, called Colour Look-Up Tables (CLUTs).

SAMPLE THOSE SOUNDS!

Now you're really talking! You might complain about the slow processor and the limitations of the graphics, but when it comes to sound, the SNES has no competition. The sound chip has been designed by Sony and is generally regarded as the best of its kind in any console anywhere.

The chip has eight Pulse Code Modulation

(PCM) stereo channels, which basically means that every sound the SNES kicks out is a 'sample' (like when Pop Will Eat Itself rip off the Twilight Zone theme for their Defcon 1 track).

Because samples take up a lot of memory, depending on how good the quality is, the SNES can sample sounds at different rates, from six to 48 KHz – CD quality sound comes in at around the 44 KHz mark. However, most game sounds are sampled at around 10 KHz, because otherwise it takes huuuuge amounts of memory and eats up loads of processor time.

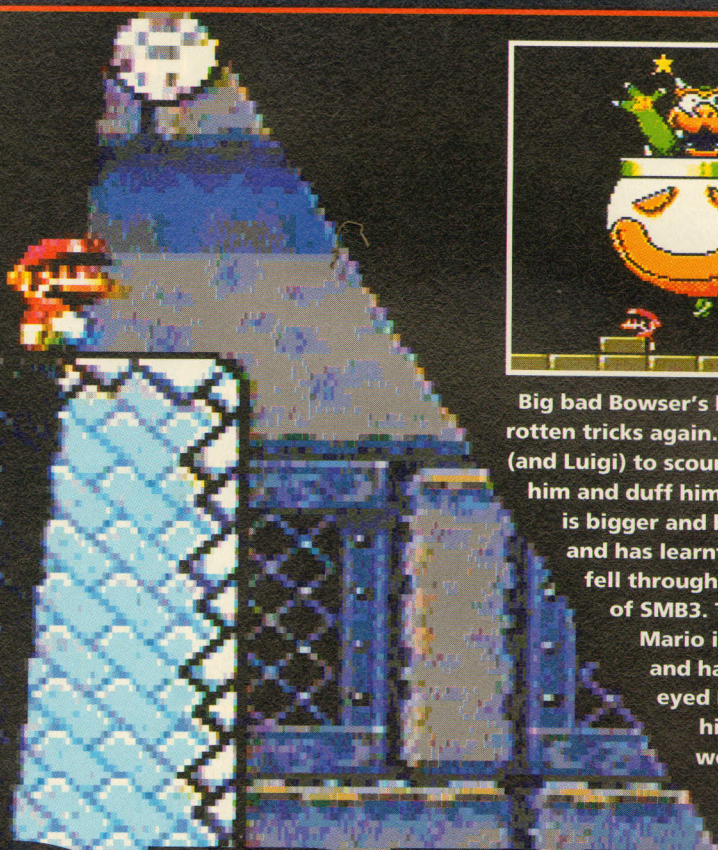
This all sounds very technical, but what it all boils down to is superb quality sound effects and soundtracks like

TOTAL!

Tech specs – SNES v Mega Drive!

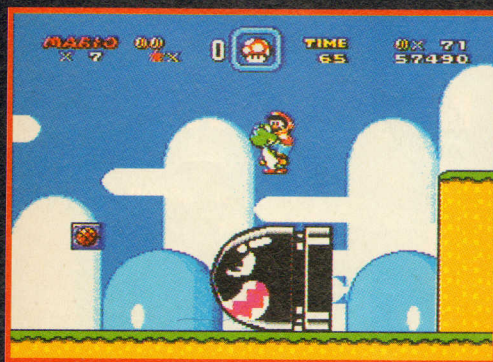
TECHY THING	NINTENDO SNES	SEGA MEGA DRIVE
Processor	65sc816	Motorola 68000
Max processor speed	3.58 MHz	7.6 MHz
Available colours	32,768	512
Colours on screen	256	64
Screen resolution	512 x 448	320 x 224
Max number of sprites	128	80
Max sprite size	64 x 64	32 x 32
Custom graphics hardware	Distortion, scaling, rotation	None
Sound capabilities	Stereo, 8-channel PCM	A bit scabby, really

SUPER MARIO



Big bad Bowser's back and up to his rotten tricks again. So it's up to Mario (and Luigi) to scour Dinosaur Land, find him and duff him up. The Koopa King is bigger and badder than before and has learnt his lesson when he fell through the floor at the end of SMB3. This time he attacks Mario in a flying machine and has an army of cross-eyed Mecha-Koopas to do his dirty work. But I wouldn't worry about him just yet...

WORLD



Remember Bullet Bill? Yeah, well I bet you don't remember him being this big! He's just as deadly as before though.

For SNES (1-2 players) From Nintendo Price Free with SNES

Right, so now you know all about the Super NES itself, I suppose you're itching to know about the games? Well, since the SNES is supposed to be coming out around Easter time, we thought it was wise to fill you in on the game that every SNES owner will be playing!

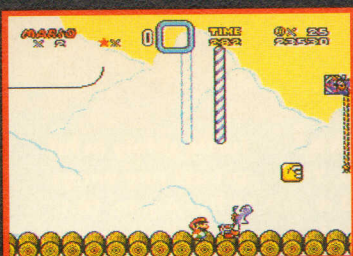
OK, so there's no prizes for knowing that Super Mario World (SMB4) comes free in the box. But what's the big M's new 16-bit adventure like – is it worth buying a SNES just to play Super Mario World?



KEYS
Superb graphics, slick animation, incredible depth, battery back-up, loads of puzzles, wonderful sound effects, a huge challenge, great playability – should I go on...?

If you've played SMB3 you'll have a good idea what lies in store, because this takes the best bits from the NES game and improves upon them. Again, Mario has a huge map to wander round so you sometimes have a choice of stages to have a go at (but not very often).

There are 99 stages to complete – and you'll have to do a lot of exploring to find them all! However, you can still defeat Bowser and complete the game without playing all the levels. (I've managed to defeat the Koopa King



Oh dear, poor old Yoshi's turned blue (I suspect it's a bit cold up there in the clouds).



Yes, Mario wants to go through that door – and no, he really doesn't want to get squashed!



Mario prepares to explore a Ghost House – they're easy to enter but real hard to leave!



There are lots of hidden levels, which are opened by a key. Find the keyhole and you're in!

And on your right, you can see the Valley Of Bowser...

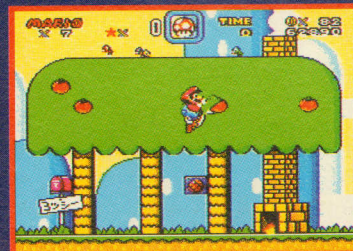
Welcome, laidees and gennlemen, to a guided tour of Dinosaur Land. Have a pleasant trip – and no puking in the aisle. Thank you!



Vanilla Dome – It's all echoey in this crystal cavern, and it's got some real nasty levels!



Valley Of Bowser – The hidden palace of the Koopa King is deep beneath Dinosaur Land

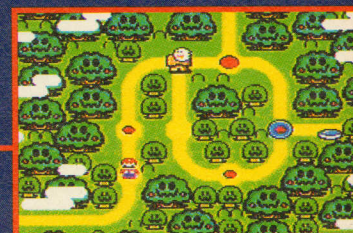


Yoshi's House – This is where Mario starts his adventure – and finishes it!



Cookie Mountain

Cheese Bridge



Forest Of Illusion – A wooded area full of weird creatures and secret pathways



Yoshi's Island – Things are nice 'n' easy here, with lots of power-ups and extra lives

Chocolate Island – This barren place is full of Dino-Rhinos. Jump on them and they become small, fire-breathing Mini-Rhinos!



Star Road – Discover the location of the Star Road and your route to Bowser will be a lot shorter!

and still have 40-odd levels to discover!).

Super Mario World certainly has a lot of secrets – far more than Mario's earlier adventures – and this is what makes the game such great fun. There's just so much to explore: every time you enter a fresh level, there's something new to see, new tricks to suss out, new secrets to discover – and new enemies to get duffed up a treat by.

The extra buttons on the SNES joystick also mean that you have more control over Mario and Luigi. As well as the run and jump buttons, Mario can also perform a useful spin-jump which enables him to smash blocks

beneath him. All the usual power-ups are there, too (although Mario's stopped wearing the silly outfits). As well as mushrooms and fire flowers, there's a flying feather – Mario can fly better than ever once he's gained his super cape!

And a good job too, because this new quest is absolutely massive – and there are no warp-style short-cuts like in SMB3. (There's a special Star Road

short cut, but you're gonna have to find it first!) Instead, the cart has a battery back-up so you can save out your position. Turn the power on and there you are, same place that you left it!



KOOPAS

I suppose it's fair to say that if you don't like level 1, level 99 won't grab you much either

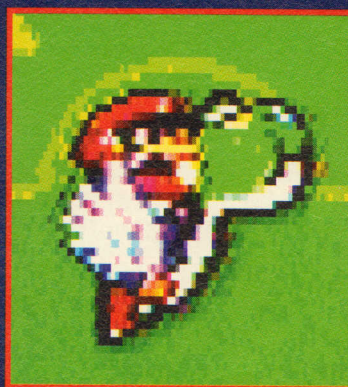


The chubby guy on the platform is a Sumo Brother (a distant fire-making relative of the Hammer Brothers). He's a pain too.

Yoshi – the dinosaur with a taste for turtles!



Yoshi is a hungry little lizard, but his greed can be put to good use. If you get him to tongue up a turtle, he takes on special powers. For instance, get him to gobble a red turtle and he'll keep it in his mouth for a while. If you press fire during this time, he releases a spray of fire to scorch the opposition!



With a blue turtle safely in his gob, Yoshi sprouts tiny wings and is able to fly! Again, this only lasts for a limited time, so make the most of it. Once he swallows the bluey, he'll plummet to the ground.



Yellow turtles give Yoshi the ability to send up sand clouds when he bounces off the ground. Any baddie in the vicinity gets clobbered by the cloud and is a gonner!



Mario's gone across Donut Plains, through the Vanilla Dome and is now up poo creek. These boss creatures sit on a rotating wheel and hurl fireballs at our hero. The fiends!

Unlike the earlier games, this one has bucket-loads of variety, in the enemies, the graphics, the puzzles, everything! It's only once you've discovered some of the secret areas and special tricks you can do, that you realise just how amazingly good this latest Mario game really is.

And, on top of all this wonderful gameplay, you also get some superb sounds 'n' pictures. There's super-slick parallax scrolling throughout, the animation is gorgeous and the bosses are brilliantly depicted. When you reach Bowser, you'll see the SNES's Mode 7 at its best!

Superb graphics and sound are just the sugar on the bun – what we have here is a brilliant, brilliant cart that makes Sonic The poxy Hedgehog look like a boardgame.

Is it worth buying a Super NES just to play Super Mario World? Yeah, I reckon it is – just. **STEVE**

TOTAL!

TOTAL! TACTIX

Super Mario World is a great big stonker of a game, so here are some decent tips to get you started on the road to Bowser!

SNEAKY SAVE GAME

You know the cart saves your position after every ghost house? Well, when you've finished a particularly tricky level, go and visit the very first ghost house again (it's a total doddle to complete it). The cart then saves your position – including the last level you played, even though you haven't reached the next 'save' point. This way you can play from level to level without having to re-play any stages you've already completed!

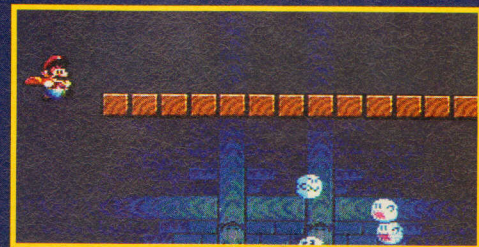
LEVEL REPLAY

You can re-enter any level you've already completed, but did you know that you can leave at any time by pressing START and then SELECT? So if you need a quick power-up, enter an old level, snatch a mushroom or leaf, then hit START and SELECT to go back to the map screen.

UNLIMITED POWER-UPS

Now this is a real game-buster of a Tactic, so only read this if you're a nerdy-twonk and really need some serious help. Anyone still reading... oh. All of you. Righty-ho, off we go.

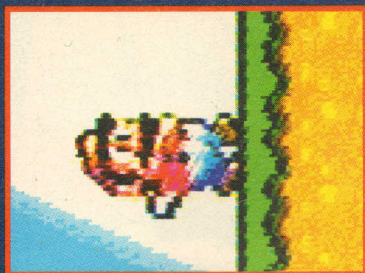
How d'you fancy coppin' for power-ups, fire flowers, magic leaves and Yoshi's whenever you damn well please? Well, there's a Top Secret Area just behind the first ghost house – but you have to be Caped Mario before you can get it.



When you enter the ghost house, move right to the first gap and then run and take off, flying from right to left. You should go up through a gap and land on a platform. Run along to the right and fall off. The yellow blocks hide 1-ups and the door leads to the exit gate. Walk though and yowser! One utterly fabby Top Secret Area.



So, what can Mario do now that he couldn't do before?



WALK UP WALLS – Pick up enough speed and our hero can peg it up vertical surfaces!



RIDE ON DOLPHINS – These guys are friendly enough, so why not just hitch a lift?



SPIN! – Mario can destroy blocks beneath him, or kill baddies with his cape.



RIDE YOSHI – This little green fella can be a lot of help – and has a terrible taste for turtles!



CLIMB WIRE MESH – In Koopa castles Mario often has to cling onto wire-mesh fencing!



FLY – With Mario's Super Cape on he can cruise the airways above Dinosaur Land.



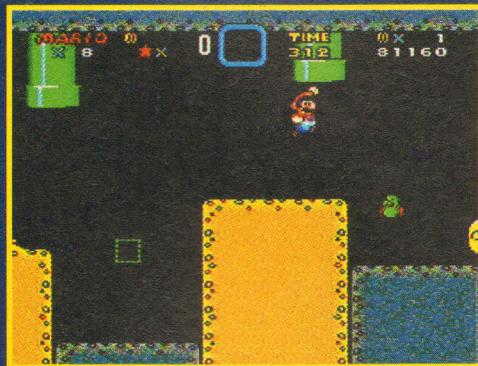
RIDE ON CLOUDS – Defeat its owner and Mario can catch some cumulus – for a while.



EAT BALLOONS – Swallow an inflatable and Mario can float aloft, but only for a short time.

GREEN KEY PALACE

The real key to getting anywhere in SMB4 is in finding the Switch Palaces. The first one is easy – only someone with rocks for brains can miss it. However, the second one ain't so obvious:



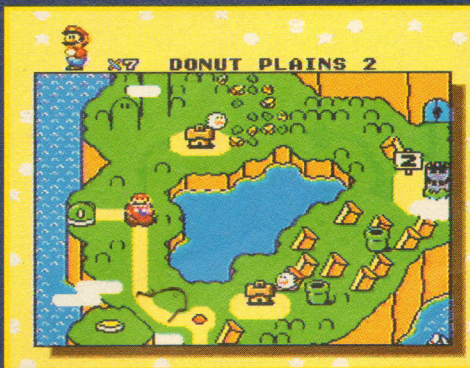
Move to the lava pit in Donut World and carry on through until you reach the second green pipe. Jump up into the pipe and you'll come out in another cavern. Flatten the American Footie

player and move right. Get the blue turtle shell by spin-jumping through the blocks – be careful not to hit it otherwise you'll get biffed.



Pick the shell up and throw it at the top-most platform – an ivy grows out of it. Jump up the platforms, climb the ivy, pick up the key and walk into the lock!

You'll leave the lava pit and a route to the green Switch Palace appears on the left. Get on in there and hit that switch!



TOTAL!

Looks



■ Superb: gorgeous colours, wonderful animation, excellent parallax scrolling...

Sounds



■ Great boppy main tune with brilliant effects. Wonderful echoey caverns!

Gameplay



■ Faultless – amazing platform action with loads of puzzles, secrets, tricks and levels!

Life span



■ Pretty easy to defeat Bowser, but finishing all 99 levels could take months!

Well, I've finished Super Mario World, I enjoyed every minute of it and I'm still playing it! This is simply one of the best games ever written!



Final rating
98
Percent

TOTAL!

TEA

TEA TIME tournament

Tea Time at the McElwain's house was a hoot. So to finish off we held a mini tournament. The game? Ivan 'Ironman' Stewart's Super Off Road. The prize? A Game Boy game. Go for it!



Adam and Ross just go round in circles to start with. But, they soon get the hang of it and Ross finishes just ahead of Adam.



Garry plays Carl but despite the former being an old wrinkly, he gets a better grip of the game and wins convincingly.



And finally Steve 'wicked' Walker just scrapes in ahead of Robert Shone. Time for the three winners to enter the final.

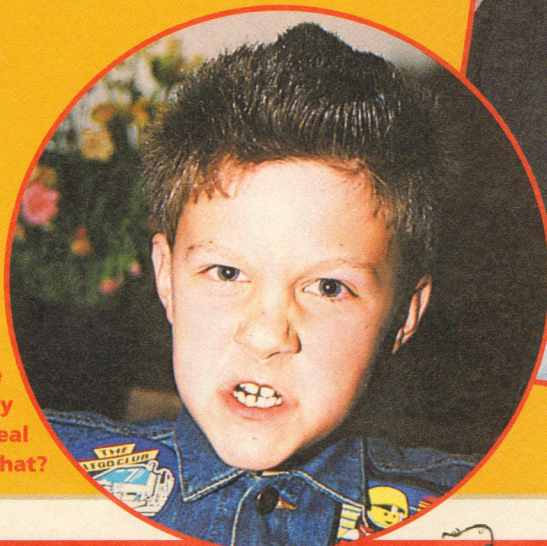


Ross puts up a brave fight, Garry gets it horribly wrong (knew it was too good to be true) and Steven screeches home first.

And so here he is, the winner. We asked Steven to give us a look of victory for the camera but instead he just settled for 'utterly hideous and frightening'.

Still, he won fair and square so as a reward we presented him with a free Game Boy game. Actually we just handed him an empty case and sent the real game on in the post a few days later. Organised or what?

The winner!



TEA TIME



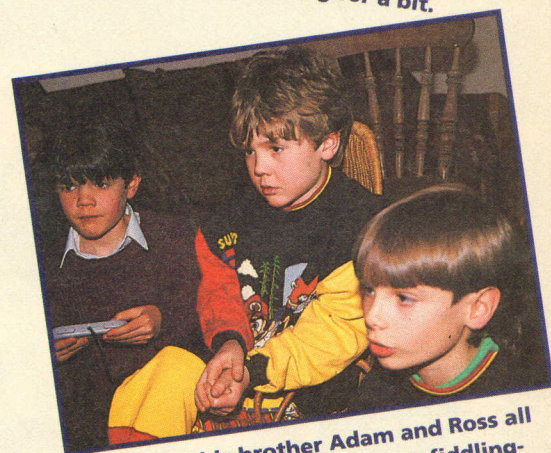
Time for some scoff and Thicky kindly waits until everyone else has started...



... Whereas Steve immediately stuffs 15 tea cakes into his gaping gob at once!



Ha Haaaa! Poor Thicky's fallen for the old Evo-stick in the butter dish trick. Still, that'll stop him wibbling for a bit.



Rob Shone, his brother Adam and Ross all wait patiently for Steve to stop fiddling with the TV set. 'Hurry up you old nonce!'

The tea-time team...

Carl Thomas
Age: 8
Fave game: SMB3



Ross McElwain
Age: 9
Fave game: Star Wars



Garry McElwain
Age: 150+
Fave game: Er, tiddly-winks

Steven Walker
Age: 10
Fave game: Tetris



Adam Shone
Age: 9
Fave game: SMB3



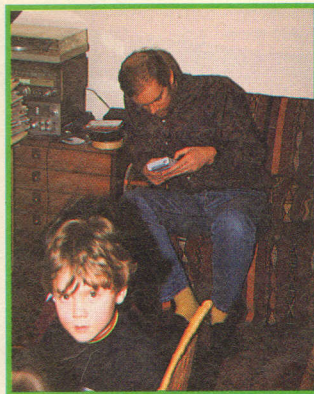
Steven Walker explains how to play Final fight. Unfortunately, Carl Thomas looks as though he's about to fall asleep.



Steve digs around inside the monitor to find Mario and chums. Sad gimp.



'Giz a go!' Steve Walker shows the sad gimp how it's done on Home Alone.



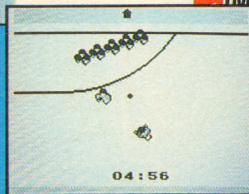
Ross's dad tries to pick up Home And Away on the Game Boy. Oh dear...

Who's next?

Another month, another visit. And this time, the person unlucky enough to have us inflicted upon his family is Sam Feek of Windsor in Berkshire. We're looking forward to that. As for the rest of you, don't forget that we pick the Tea Time winners from a hat, so there's every chance it could be you. Send your name, address and telephone number to: TOTAL Tea Time, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

BLISTERING PACE SOCCER AT IT'S BEST.

- Fast - Realistic
- Fun to Play



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Each player on the pitch is an individual with a unique combination of skills and physical attributes.

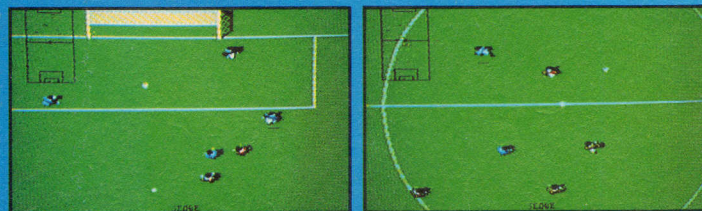
Instinctive joystick controls to Pass, Dribble, Shoot, Head and Chip the ball or do a Sliding Tackle.

Curling Corner Kicks, controlled Throw Ins and Goal Kicks.

Injury and Extra Time. Red and Yellow Cards. Set Piece Free Kicks and the famous AFTER TOUCH to let you bend, swerve and dip the ball. Plus a host of other options.

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Original
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Review info

Life's too short to spend that good, honestly-earned cash (which you bagged off a mate) on a load of old rubbish, isn't it? That's why every month we put hours of effort into the Review section. Here you can idle your way through our words of well-thought wisdom – or, if you're in a rush, simply glance at the 'thumbs up' and 'thumbs down' bits.



GOOD THINGS

If it does everything from your washing up to taking you out to dinner, it'll go here...



BAD THINGS

... But if the whole thing has left us thinking that we'd rather eat frog spawn, it'll be here

At this point you might think 'aaaarrghh' and turn over. But wait! It takes lots of things to make a decent cart, so we also rate the sound effects, graphics, gameplay and lifespan. A green square means good and a red square means bad (It had to be simple for Thicky). Then we round off with a summary bubble and overall rating.

TOTAL!

Looks



Is it a real stunner or is it as visually exciting as Thicky in his underpants?

Sounds



Good sounds can really make a game, bad ones can kill it off. We'll tell you here

Gameplay



This is the really, important bit 'cos if it doesn't play well, why buy it at all?

Life span



Can you play on and on and on – or is it something you'll finish in a day?

The bubble bit. It's where me and that sad little collection of spare parts, Thicky, sum up exactly how we feel about the game we're reviewing

Final rating
92
Percent

This month

Now as promised, Thicky's west country accent: 'Ooh arr me babber, look at these gurt reviews.' Next month, Welsh!



Kick Off

Page 24

Gooooaa! It's here and it's a real corker. Throw your other footy carts in the bin and get down to some fast-movin', goal scorin', shin-kickin' world cup stuff.



Chip 'n' Dale

Page 26

What do you do with a cross between Jean-Claude Van Damme and two rodents armed with tomatoes? Have a ball, that's what! An outrageous romp through chipmunk land.



Kickle Cubicle

Page 28

Take a stroll in the weird and wacko world of Fantasy Kingdom and find an excellent little puzzler with enough tricks to give you brain ache! Smart graphics give it the edge.



Probotector

Page 30

Eight levels of really tricky, scrolling shoot 'em up set in guess where? Yup! The future. But don't despair, this is mind-blowin' stuff to test yer shootin' skills to the full.



Jack Nicklaus Golf

Page 24

One of the very few Golf sims on the NES. Jack Nicklaus Golf only features one course and some very dodgy gameplay. This is a bit of a double bogey. Sorry Jack!



Caveman Ninja

Page 34

Caveman Joe's women have been kidnapped. If the human race is to survive he'll have to travel through level after level of dinos to rescue them. Good looks but it's repetitive.



The Bugs Bunny Birthday Blowout

Page 36

Oh dear. To celebrate Bugs Bunny's 50th birthday, Kemco Seika release a pile of dung. Er... many happy returns, Bugs (poor soul).



Blue Shadow

Page 38

Stunning looking Ninja slash 'em up with some brilliant challenges and superb simultaneous two-player action. It plays like a dream but is it a tad to easy? Er, yes.



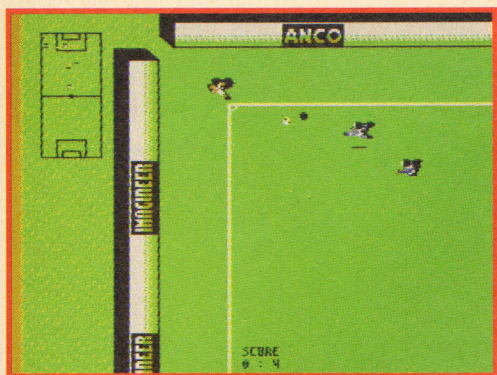
Mission Impossible

Page 40

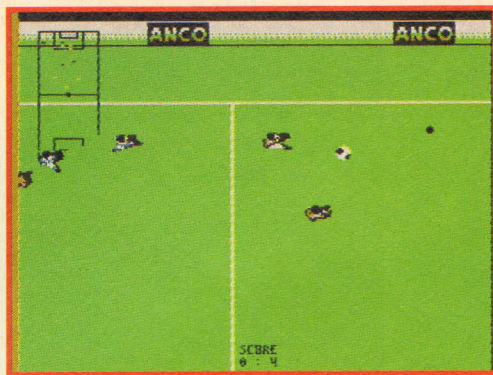
If you're one of our 'older' readers (above 15) you'll remember this cult TV series. Well don't self destruct just yet because this NES version is well worth a go, if just for the theme tune!

TOTAL!

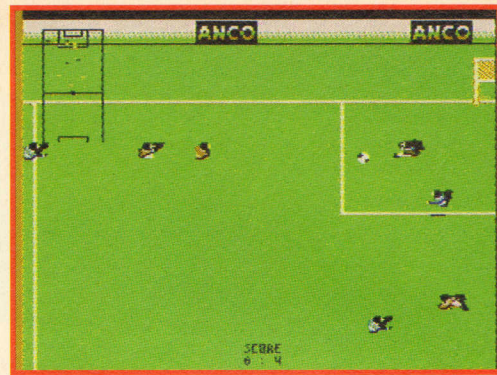
NES REVIEWS



Games can be won and lost on the strength of a corner. Here the red team firmly hit the ball across the pitch but the blue team seem to have it well covered...



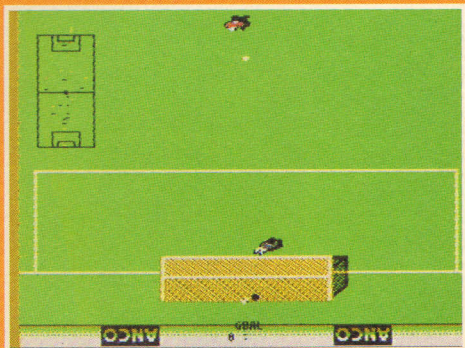
... Or have they? Having got past some of the defence, the ball is well on its way to the goal mouth, and there are two strikers just waiting to hammer it home...



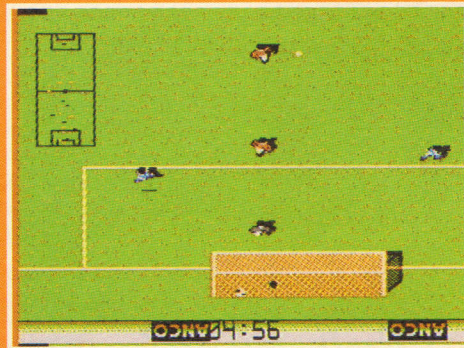
... But oh dear! What a pathetic end to a perfect goal-scoring opportunity. The ball comes back to earth with a bump and trickles gently into the goalies' hands!

KICK OFF

Take your pitch – the choice is yours



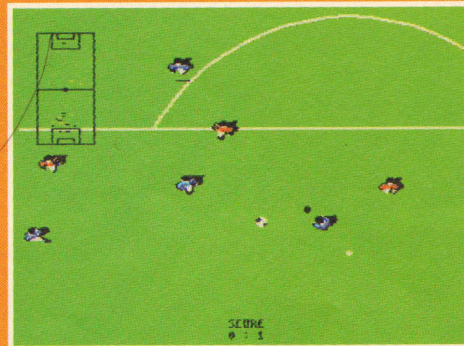
Pitch 1 – Normal. It's green, grassy and moderately bouncy. Er, that it really.



Pitch 2 – Wet. The ball bounces less and travels more slowly on this surface.



Pitch 3 – Soggy. Yuk! You can really feel the players struggling on this one.



Pitch 4 – Plastic. The game gets incredibly fast and the ball bounces higher.

For NES (1-2 players)

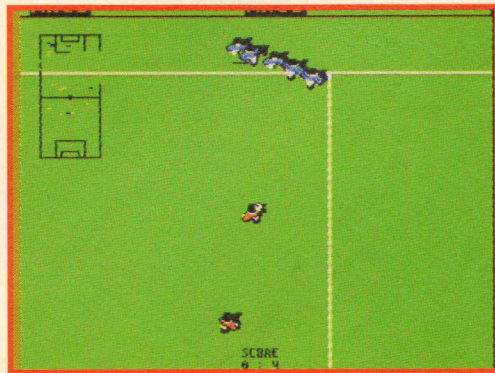
From Anco

Price £36

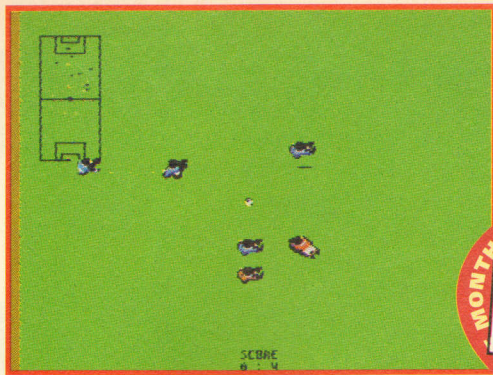
Have you been reading TOTAL right from issue one? Yes? Then you'll have heard us wibbling on about how brill Kick Off would be when it finally comes out. Well, it's out and we can now say, 'Ha! We were right, this is absolutely triff-o-fab.'

Yes, just as we expected, Kick Off on the NES is everything we ever hoped for, and more. So you might as well throw those other footy carts in the bin – after you've played this you'll never look at another soccer game again.

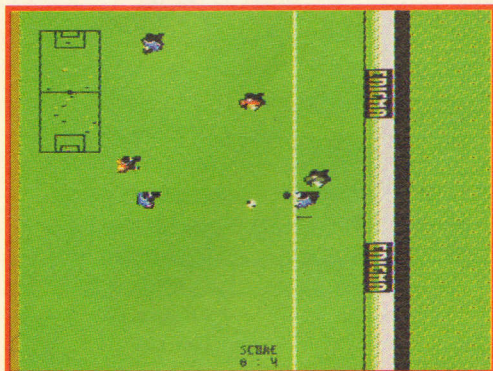
And what is it that makes this game so good? Well for one thing it's fast (even faster than the



Ah! It's obviously the defensive wall of the rather crap Australian national side (in away strip). Hey guys, the goals on the right! You don't want to stand there etc...



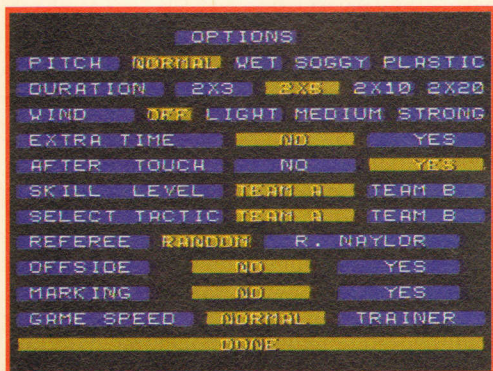
Fouls can be both great fun and a source of eternal torment. Mind you, when you get booked, there's always the consolation of seeing the other player go off injured.



The red team boots the ball out of play so the blue team gets to throw it back in again. You can guide the ball a bit with the joypad, but the players on the field need to be quick if they want to gain possession.

Amiga version which was the best version ever), and for another it's incredibly true-to-life. Now before you say anything, we know the graphics aren't all that realistic, but it's the way it plays that'll have you hooked right from the word go.

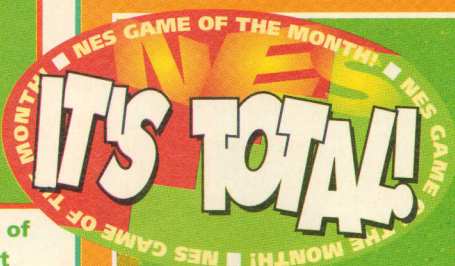
Apart from all the usual footy rules like throw-ins, corners, penalties and free kicks, there are also some classic moves at your fingertips. You can chip the ball, control it from a volley, do spectacular sliding tackles (at the risk of fouling) and head the ball.



It's pointless trying to list all the available options in Kick Off, there are far too many. And, amazingly, each option has a marked effect on the feel of the game. Cripes!

You fouled up! Now pay the penalty

Penalties are taken at two points in the match: when a player is fouled in the penalty area, or if the game's a draw after extra time. Then it's used to decide the result.

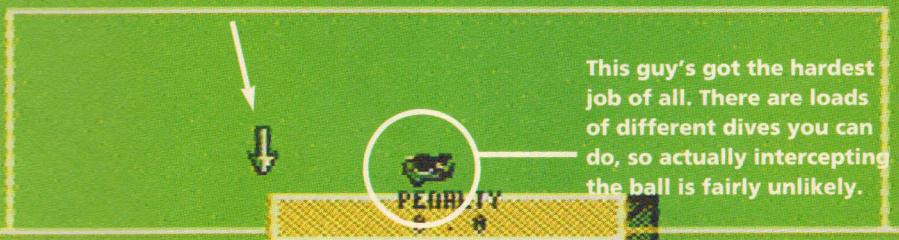


The pressure's on. More often than not, penalties result in a goal. But there's always that slight chance that you'll mis-kick it – just like in real footie!



The ball seems to be feeling the pressure too. Look at it shake. Still, I s'pose I'd do the same if I was about to get kicked by a studded boot travelling really fast.

This arrow whizzes back-and-forth across the goalmouth. This isn't to try and put the players off but determines where the ball will go when the fire button is pressed!



This guy's got the hardest job of all. There are loads of different dives you can do, so actually intercepting the ball is fairly unlikely.

There are also options for wind speed, pitch surface, offside rules and... ooh, loads more. And while it's true that many of these features have been tried in other games, here they really work! Playing on a plastic pitch feels exactly as it should, and going in hard on a tackle is a dodgy but sometimes necessary risk. Change any one aspect of the game and you can really feel the difference – something which can't really be said of any other footy game on the NES.

The point I'm trying to make is this: in other footy games you're sometimes left wondering whether the computer has made a mistake, but in Kick Off, any

mistakes you make are all your own. You may curse and swear but it'll be at yourself, and not at the NES.

Of course it would be short-sighted of me to claim that it's perfect – even Kick Off has its dodgy bits, like the goalies who often seem less than pathetic, and the ref's terrible decision-making abilities. Sometimes, a throw-in seems to go to the wrong team, or you'll be awarded a corner when it should have been the other team's goal kick.

Never mind, apart from these minor faults this is superb! Against the computer you're going to have a riot, but play with a friend and your family is going to have to drag you screaming from the NES. Kick Off is here and it's brilliant!

ANDY



TOTAL!

Looks



■ The speed will amaze and though crude, the graphics do their job brilliantly

Sounds



■ Not a lot! Just the odd spot effect when you kick the ball and it bounces along

Gameplay



■ One of the most playable NES games there is. Two player mode is unbeatable

Life span



■ Beating the NES could take months. And you could be playing friends for years

I hate going over the top but this really is a remarkable game. Some folk won't like it, but they're mad. Go out and but it right now!

Final rating
93
Percent

CHIP 'N' DALE

For NES (1-2 players)

From Capcom

Price £45

There's something peculiarly American about the Chipmunk (for a start that's about the only place you find 'em). But what I'm driving at is the fact that the only time you ever hear about these lovable squirrel-type chaps is when Disney needs another sickeningly, disgustingly, hideously, obnoxiously, fluffy-wuffy type creature to grace a cartoon. Hence the creation of two chipmunks who go by the somewhat odd names of Chip and Dale.

Our two enterprising rodents enjoy getting into all sorts of scraps and scrapes through their



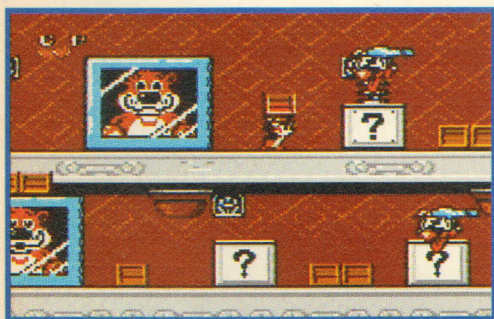
UPPERS

Great graphics brilliantly capture the cartoon chipmunks. The two-player option is a scream!

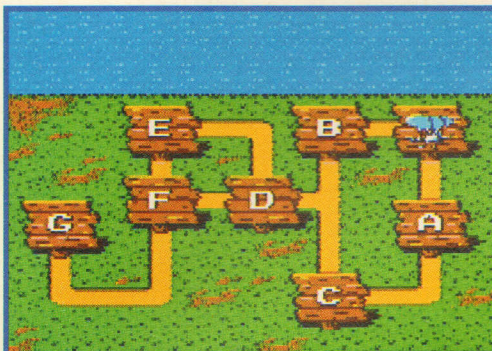


DOWNERS

Long levels and the restart points are few and far between



Whass' going on here? Chipmunk-and-a-crate, bear-in-a-case and a Jack-in-the-box.



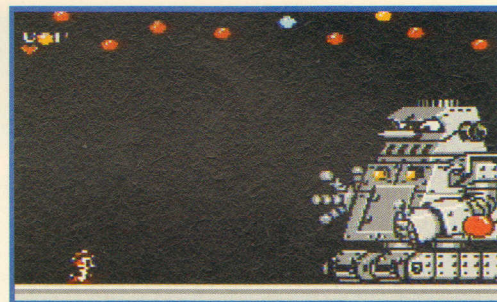
In true Super Mario-style, you can select which level Chip 'n' Dale should go to next.

jobs as Rescue Rangers.

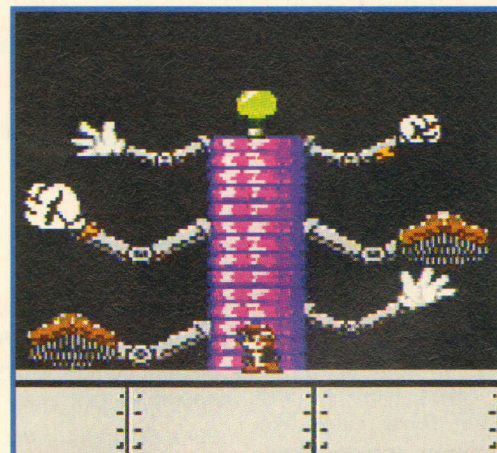
In fact, they get into so many tricky situations in this, their first NES game, that you'd think they had cast-iron underpants and the kind of life-preserving skills usually employed by Indiana Jones and James Bond. Except that while Indy has his whip and 007 has his Walther PPK, Chip and Dale have got, erm, tomatoes.

Our two heroes have got a pretty tough mission on their hands and no mistake. The arch-baddie of the plot (one aptly-named Fat Cat) has decided to take over the city and has kidnapped Chip and Dale's best friend, Gadget, in order to bring his evil plans to fruition.

Of course, the radical rodents must rescue Gadget and defeat Fat Cat. The game is played over seven levels. Each of these has about four stages to it, plus the standard end-of-level baddie. So while the scenes change slightly from stage to stage, it's only when you complete a level that



Ah. Suddenly, our valiant Rescue Ranger remembers that he's 'left the gas on. Bye!'



Oh no, it's the dreaded 'wash and brush up' guardian: death by tidiness. Aaargh!

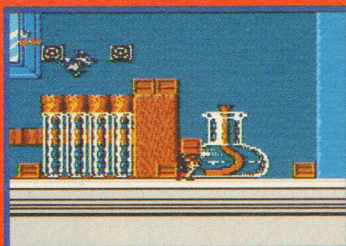
you'll find yourself struggling against completely new baddies.

One of the most impressive features of the game is Chip and Dale's flexibility. They spring

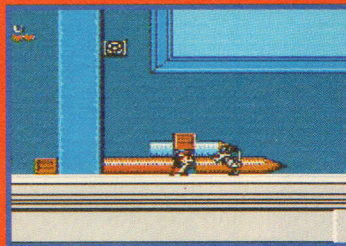
A Chip off the old block, but what's with the crate?



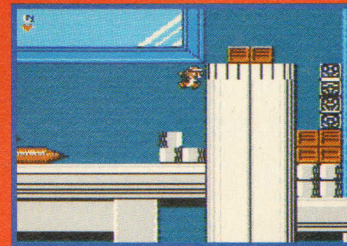
Good ol' Chip. He can pick up boxes and chuck 'em next to tall objects to help him over.



Look, he's at it again. But don't forget, there's more than one way to fling a box...

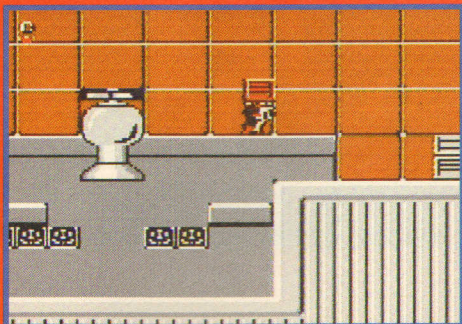


... You can also use them as a weapon. Lob them at the bad guys to send them flying!

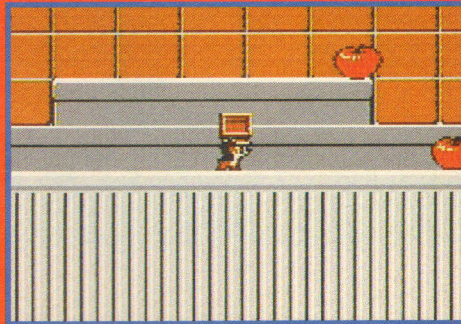


Oh, what a berk. The useless chipmunk has forgotten to bring some crates with him.

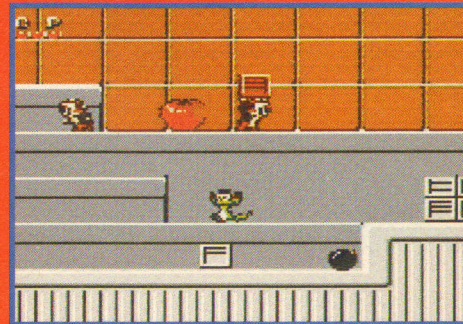
Cripes! Yet more crate-related chipmunk antics



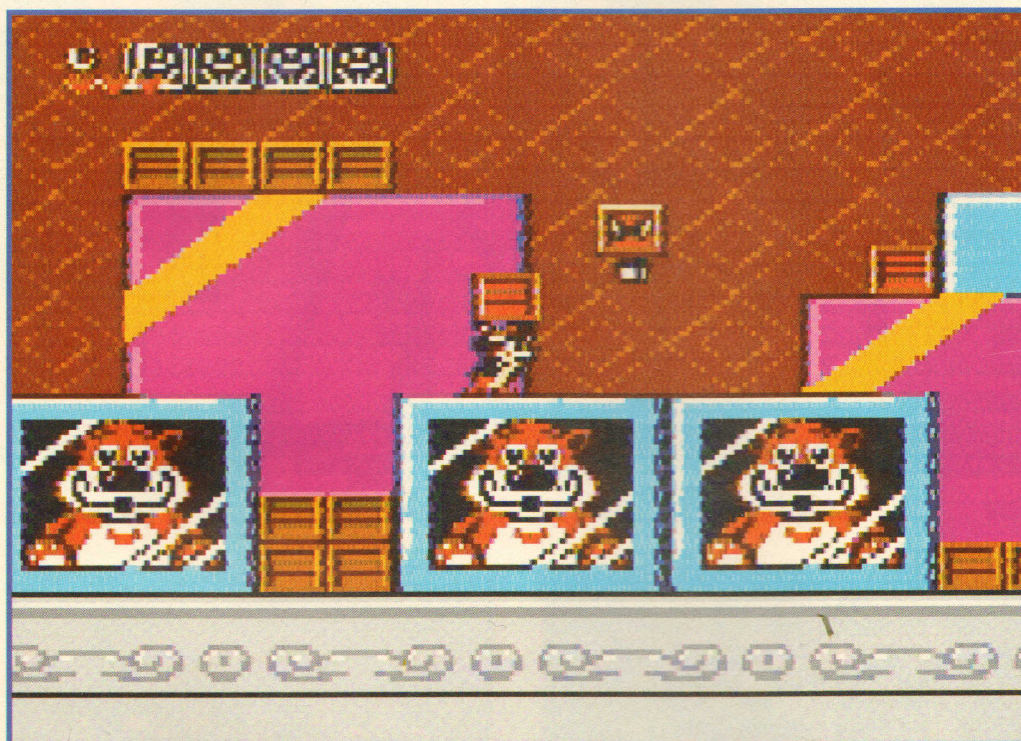
Why has Chip always got a crate?
Because he can hide inside it and protect himself from any passing enemies.



In which case, why on earth does the furry little geek insist on simply balancing it on his head all the time?

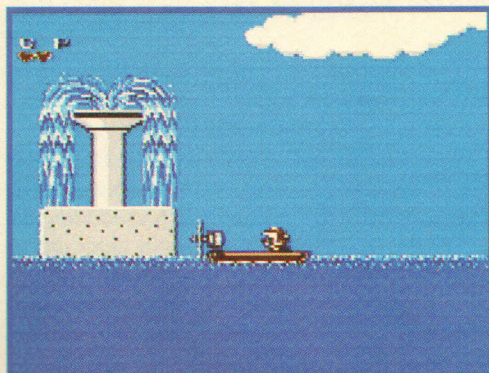


Hmm... I'm starting to suspect he's fallen for the old 'superglue-on-the-crate' trick so beloved of Fat Cat and his cronies.



Horrors! Which villain could possibly enjoy stuffing cuddly little bears into glass boxes!

and bound about with considerable speed, unless they're carrying a heavy weight such as a tomato or a crate. This makes it possible to pull out of a particular jump if you don't think you're going to make it. What's more, the Rescue Rangers have got some special extra special moves which make life much easier.



If that boat was bigger I guess you could call him a shipmunk. Erm, maybe not.

Graphically the game's spiffingly-spunkworthy (or should that be spankably-spiffworthy? Oh, whatever). The backgrounds are bright, colourful and completely apt, while the baddies are smoothly animated and come in so many different flavours you wonder if there's a special factory nearby churning out pongy baddie-types. This vast range of enemies means a constant uphill struggle for our rambling rodents though!

The same-time two-player game is also something to watch out for. There are some brilliant touches here, such as being able to stun your friend (try bouncing a crate off his nut), or even balancing him on your head.

Everything about Chip 'n' Dale's Rescue Rangers hangs together really well. The difficulty curve's pretty spot on and it's a heck of a lot of fun working out just how to get through a particular stage as quickly as possible. I think I can safely say that this is the best fun you'll have with two small furry things for a long time.

ANDY



Booo! Fat Cat – scourge of the Rescue Rangers and all-round felonious feline.

TOTAL!

Looks



Bright, brash and inventive with some great animation – a real cartoony feel

Sounds



Two soundtracks, but hey, that's what volume controls are for, right? Yuk!

Gameplay



Very intuitive control method – you won't need to read the instruction manual

Life span



Even when you've completed it, the two-player mode will keep you playing

Groovesome, slick and utterly dashing platform game with some ingenious two-player twists and a brain-curdling difficulty curve!

Final rating
81
Percent

TOTAL!



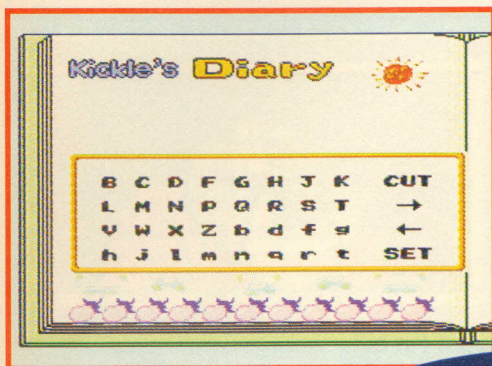
1 To 'do' this level, you need to make an ice bridge from the hammer on the right to the island with the words 'boom' on it (explodey creatures).



2 To do this you have to line the hammers up so that when the ice block hits the first hammer it knocks it along the walkway towards the second.



3 With that done, you now need to make a block by icing one of the blue baddies. Once he's solid, kick him towards the first hammer!



A neat little feature is Kickle's Diary, where you input the level pass codes. There are identical pages in the manual so you can keep track of the codes.

ICE CUBES
Lovely graphics, addictive puzzles and a password option. Bliss!

KICKLE

For NES (1 player)

From Nintendo/Irem

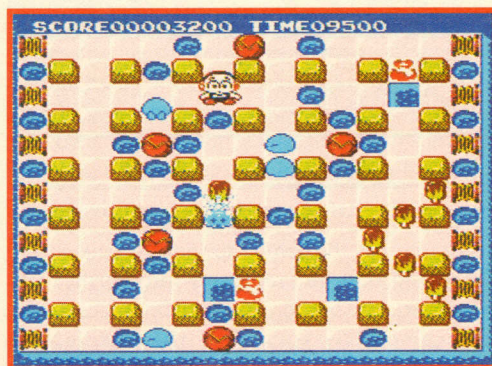
Price £35



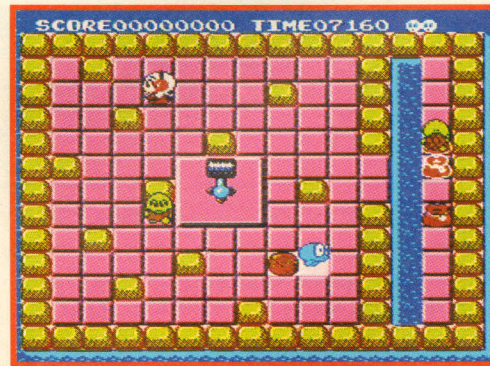
One of the end-of-world baddies. They hurl things at Kickle which break into bits...



... Kickle can then kick them back. Three hits and this green gimp's history!



Kickle's problem: he has to use the springs to bounce the blocks to fill in the square gaps. (And he's got me in control.)



This is a lot trickier than it looks – all you have to do is ice the Noggle and kick him into the watery gap. Yeah, think about it...

I've got to warn you that it's Monday morning and I'm feeling mean. Which is why I'm real glad that a nasty thing happened to all the people in the Fantasy Kingdom.

The Wicked Wizard King – a man after my own heart – also got out of the wrong side of bed this morning and decided to get his own back on the sickeningly-cute inhabitants of this fantasy land.

Great guy, the Wicked Wizard – my sorta fella. In a fit of complete nastiness, he turns everything to ice, locks everybody away in Dream Bags and conjures up loads of nasty-looking Noggles to protect the bags from interfering do-gooders.

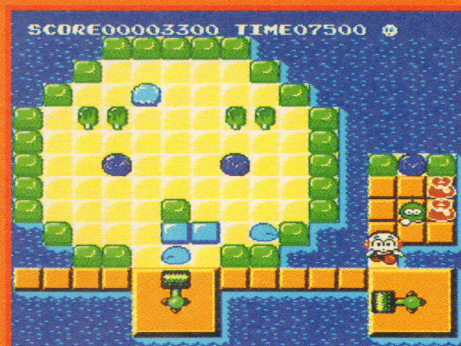
And speak of the devil, here comes chief hero and main character Kickle – a young buck with a big crush on the princess of Fantasy Kingdom.

Now this guy looks pretty wet and as soon as I see him I think, 'Oh great, another gimpy hero to control. Why can't I ever be the Wicked Wizard?'

But no! Kickle might have a soppy name and be as cute as a button, but he can really kick Noggle butt – and a good job too, 'cos he's got his work cut out. The four lands of Fantasy Kingdom are broken up into several islands with either a strip of water or rocks separating Kickle from the Dream Bags. Solving the puzzles involves hitting button B



4 The ice block hits the hammer and stops dead. The hammer then whizzes around 270 degrees and knocks it towards the second hammer.

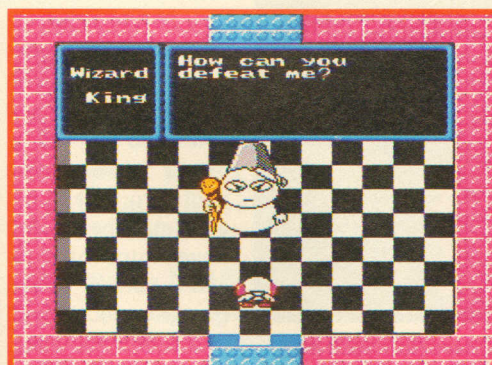


5 Ta-daa! It worked! The ice block hit the second hammer, which span around and knocked it into the the little gap. Now Kickle is able to walk across...

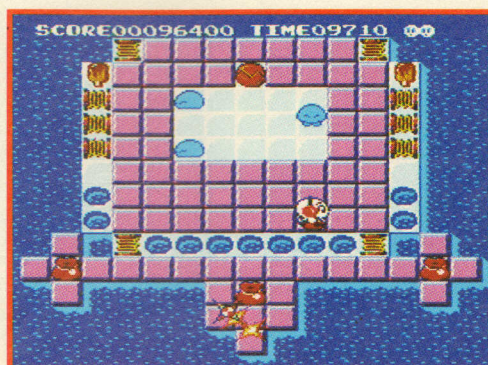


6 ... Collect all the bags (being careful not to get wasted by the little explodey creatures) and Robert's a relative - end of level, strawberries ahoj!

CUBICLE



Once you complete all four worlds, you get to meet and defeat the evil Wizard King. That's the end of the main game...



... But then comes the Special Round in which you get to sit and ponder for hours over incredibly difficult levels like this!

to freeze Noggles into ice cubes, and then kicking them into the water to form bridges to the islands.

This isn't as easy as it sounds, since the Noggles follow you around. The trick is to tempt them into a useful position before zapping them.

Our Kickle's also got a neat trick up his sleeve in the form of ice pillars, which he can make appear or disappear at the flick of a button. These really come in handy on the later levels where, as well as Noggles, Kickle has exploding Sparkys, cannon ball-firing Equalizers

DOWNERS
You can romp through all four worlds in one day (leaving just the hard level)

and beach ball-rolling Bonkers to put up with!

At the end of each world Kickle has to face one of the palace guardians, who dislikes Kickle more than I do and tries very hard to cream our cute little heroid by hurling blocks at him. Blimey, all this hassle for some dumb princess.

Still, defeat the guardian and you're treated to a brilliant end-of-level sequence!

The one thing I do find odd about this game is the endless supply of continues and passwords displayed for every single level. Sure,

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Neat screens, cute baddies and superbly animated inter-level sequences

Sounds



■ Typically twee, bouncy, bubbly tune, but the spot effects are nice 'n' arcadey

Gameplay



■ The arcade-style puzzles are brilliantly designed for maximum brain-burst!

Life span



■ If you can cope with the Special Round, then you could demolish it in one day

A perfect puzzle game - the low mark just reflects the lack of a long-term challenge. Mind you, I reckon your kid brother or sister would love it!



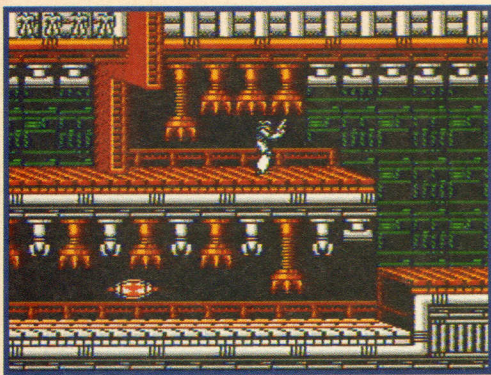
they make the game fun to play, but it also means that you can rescue the prim princess and be the saviour of Fantasy Kingdom in a day or two.

Thankfully, Kickle Cubicle is saved from a rate worse than 10% by an extra Special Round which you play at the end of the game. Suddenly the difficulty level goes through the roof and you're left wishing you could go back and play the first level again!

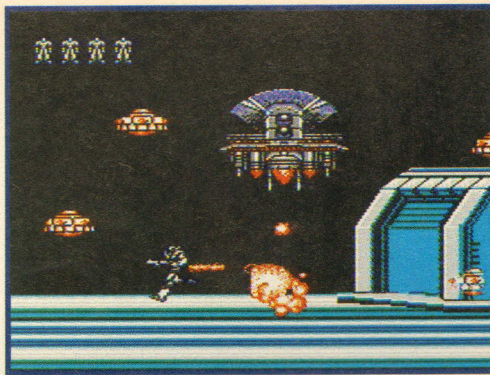
I still think your combat-hardened NES vets will walk all over Kickle Cubicle, but it's certainly cheered my Monday morning up no end!

STEVE

TOTAL!



What an attractive android you must be. This bit of machinery can't keep its hands off you. Sadly, these claws kill on contact.



This guardian's hard to kill. Not only do you have to blast those mini ships, you also have to shoot the big one in the belly.



Fortunately, robots don't feel the cold, or else this snow-scape would cause real problems. Graphical variety is high in this game.

PROBOTECTOR

For NES (1 - 2 players)

From Konami

Price £35

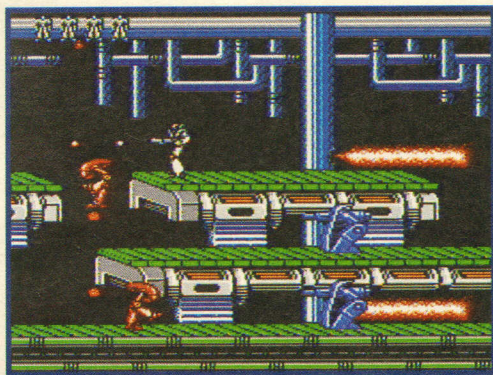
Yippety-skip, bundle all the kids into the car, we're all off to the future yet again. It's a blissfully peaceful place where man and machines live in harmony. Or did until a large alien was found in an underground hideout preparing to destroy the human race.

Why we can't meet some aliens that introduce us to 50,000 new strains of herbal tea is beyond me, but no, as it is, the world is in jeopardy and it's up to two robot warriors to sort it all out.

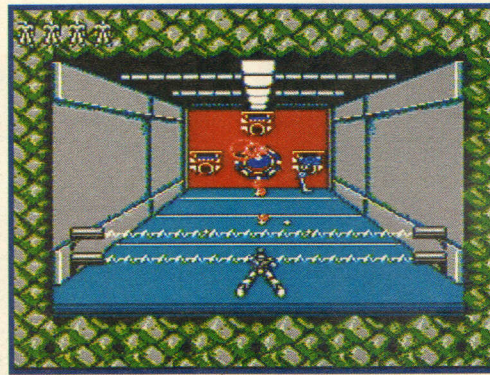
So what sort of game is it then? Well, if you've ever seen a game called Contra, this is it. And I don't mean the gameplay or graphics are vaguely familiar, this really *is* Contra.

As far as the TOTAL team can tell, and for what reason we really couldn't say, the programmers have taken Contra, changed the sprites from humans to robots, and called it Probotector. So if you liked Contra in the arcades, you're gonna like this – it's almost identical!

There are eight big-ish levels which alternate between scrolling platform shoot 'em ups and 3D Operation Wolf-type action. In the platform



There are two very distinct game styles in Probotector. The first is this scrolling platform shoot 'em up sort of affair. And...



... The other is this 3D Operation Wolf-type blast. In this bit you have to destroy that 'eye' on the back wall, er, and crouch a lot.



ROBOTS

The levels are huge and the backdrops varied. The action is frantic. Two different game styles, brilliant! Two-player mode works really well



ROBOTOMS

Although the levels are massively challenging, the end-of-level guardians are fairly easy to beat

sections the control method will rack you off a treat at first. You can jump, crouch and fire in eight directions but because you can do so much, it's easy to stand up accidentally and BOOM! – you're

blasted by the very thing you're trying to your best to avoid.

Likewise, if there's a gun emplacement on a platform below and you try to shoot diagonally down, you might crouch and get a bullet in the gut. But never mind because after half a dozen games you'll be well aware of these limitations and proceed more carefully.

The other sections are hard to fault really, apart from the fact that they're frustratingly difficult. In each room you encounter a wall full of weapons. While avoiding the huge amount of firepower you have to figure out whether to crouch, jump or move to one side in order to hit the things.

It's not a huge puzzle, but one momentary lapse of concentration and you're history, so the first few times you play it, you might get put off. Persevere though because you'll soon discover a neatly-designed shoot 'em up.

Add to that the brilliantly designed end-of-level challenges and we're heading for a hot blaster that'll keep you playing for months.

ANDY

TOTAL!



Would you believe it. We've reached the very last guardian on the very last level. We're not telling you how to kill it though.



TOTAL!

Looks



■ Good, with a lot of variety in the backdrops from level to level. Great sprites!

Sounds



■ Kerpow! Nice and meaty weapon FX. There's a different blast for each gun

Gameplay



■ Pretty fab – there's a big, ten-level challenge here, plus two different game styles

Life span



■ A tough, long-lasting game which is almost impossible without the cheats on

This may be a really old arcade game but it's not showing its age at all. The graphics are spot-on and the gameplay is frantic and not to be missed

Final rating
85
Percent



It's not all right! There's uppy bits too!

The beastly guardian. He has two swirling tentacles that shoot fireballs at you. Destroy these whirling monstrosities and the beast itself will explode before your very eyes

You've probably seen some of these further down the level. There are dozens of 'em. But don't worry, they're a piece of cake to kill

Yoiks! Watch out for these big guns. They spin around to face you in no time at all. As soon as it comes into view, blast it!

This smaller gun moves more slowly than its big brother and fires less frequently. It's still best to get rid of it though. Leave a few on screen and things can get pretty dangerous

These snipers don't pose any real threat. If you can get a good shot at them do it. Otherwise just ignore 'em

Some platforms are too high to reach so you'll need to use these moving ones. Don't get complacent though. One false move and you'll plummet

A fiery platform. If you kill the surrounding opponents and take your time it's no real problem. Rush things and you get fried

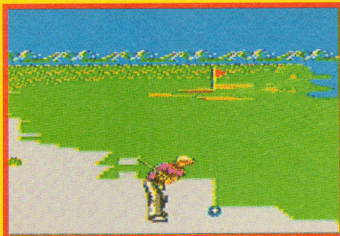
Your best bet is to keep moving. These falling boulders are fairly easy to avoid, but hang around, and you may find one appearing from the top of the screen and crushing you

If there's one thing you should shoot it's this. Once destroyed it releases a power-up. Get it, or get wasted





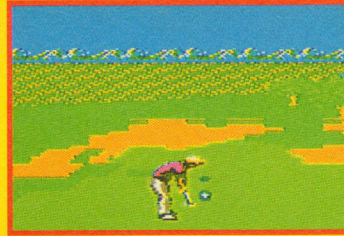
I've challenged Thicky to a game of 'skins' where we play for money. I'm up above and the dweeb is down below.



Ha! My first shot clonks its way onto the trolley path, while the flongy plops one in the drink and drops a shot!



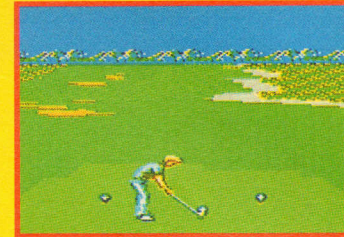
Hoo! My second drive is naff - leaving me to chip it onto the green. Andy makes a decent recovery shot and putts it in.



Rats! I putt it down for four, drawing the hole. Andy's already teeing off on the second green.



Oh disaster! goes out of he has to again. My



For NES (1-4 players)

From Konami

Price £35

JACK NICKLAUS

Greatest 18 Holes Of Major Championship Golf

Before I go any further, let's get one thing clear. This is a golf game. There's no blasting or platforms, no end-of-level bosses or high-speed scrolling. So if you're not into golf in a BIG way, I'd turn over and have a look at Caveman Ninja instead.

Like most golf games JNG18HOMCG (for short!) features 3D-style scenes as viewed from behind your golfer chappie. The graphics are very well done, with bunkers, trees and even the odd club house here and there.



You see this screen after you've finished all 18 holes - and by then I'm ready to quit.



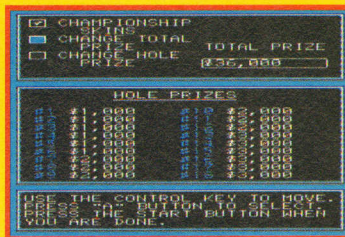
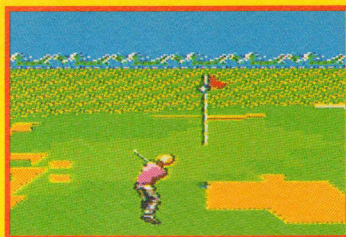
Solo golfers can choose a number of opponents - this bloke's called Natasha. Hmm...



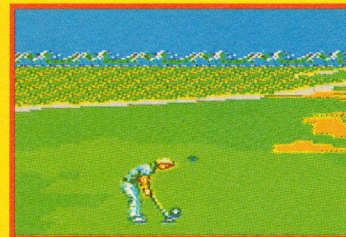
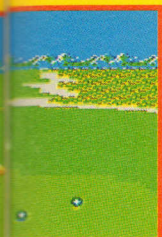
Poor old Jack looks like he's played a few too many holes on the Sellafield course!

But all this 3D takes a lot of calculating to get it on screen, so this isn't exactly the fastest game you'll ever see. In fact, every time you hit the ball, the screen re-draws to show the new scene, which takes a good seven or eight seconds. This doesn't sound much, but after a while, it really gets on your nerves.

All the usual options are here, like pro and amateur settings, different tee positions and multi-player options. Your games can include computer opponents with varying degrees of crapness - or



Andy's shot bounds so tee off drive's OK. Tut! I'm in the rough, but I can reach the green next go. Spawny Dyer hits the fairway with a clear shot at the flag. Damn! Missed the green. Still, Dyer muffed his shot, leaving short of the hole. He's got another chip onto the green. Phew! I just miss the hole with my pitch, leaving me an easy-peasy putt. Dyer gets it on the green, so it's all on this shot... ... And he's missed it! The crowd go wild, Misery Guts takes the pot (\$2,000) and dimbo sulks for a week. Hur!



FAIRWAYS

Advanced 3D graphics really help put you in the picture. This can be lots of fun if you play with a group of golfing chums

BUNKERS

Awful putting section which is annoyingly inaccurate. The 18 holes may be hard in real life, but they're a doddle on the NES

you can be incredibly dim and play against the 'Golden Bear' himself. But since there are only 18 holes, solo golfers get a raw deal – there's only so much fun you can get out of playing the same course over and over again. So I reckon you should only buy this if you've got plenty of chums.

Indeed, with a friend or two on the receiving end of your golfing prowess, JNG18HOMCG is

quite good fun – especially when you play the 'skins' game. Each hole is worth a set amount of money and the winner is the one with the most dosh. So you don't necessarily have to get the most holes to win – just the ones with the most money at stake!

However, the game's major drawback is the



Blimey! My golfer's got more controls than an Apache attack chopper!

inaccuracy on the short shots, like pitching and putting. In fact putting is handled quite badly, with a rather naff targeting system and a 'break' meter (the slope of the green) which has an almost random effect on the ball.

JNG18HOMCG is just about OK, but Golf fans don't have much choice on the NES – your only other option is to go for Nintendo's Golf. Maybe you should take up skateboarding instead. **STEVE**

TOTAL!

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Quite pretty with decent 3D scenes, but it's only just worth waiting for

Sounds



■ Swish, clunk, clunk, clunk – and that's really all the FX you get I'm afraid

Gameplay



■ Well, golf is golf, innit? It's a bit slow and not entirely accurate. Sorry Jack!

Life span



■ Golf never really ages much, but it's a shame there's only 18 holes to play

An average golf simulation with good and bad points. Ardent golf fans shouldn't be too disappointed, but action lovers will hate it

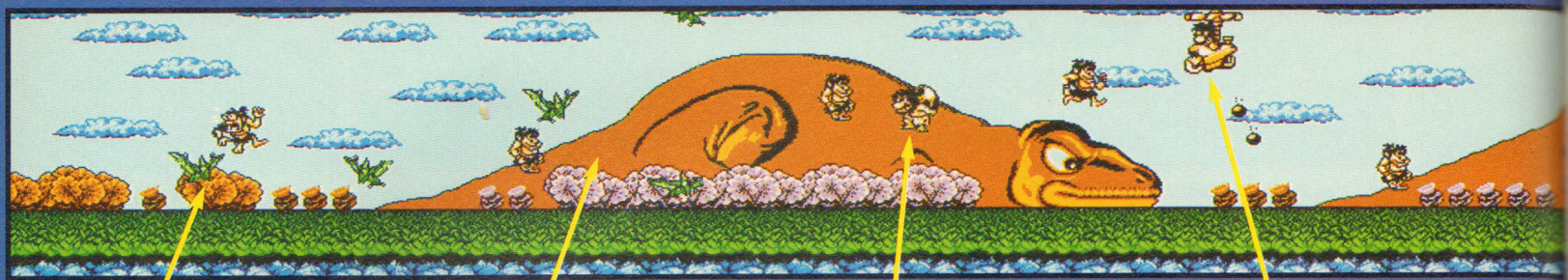
Final rating
57
Percent



On the approach to the green, Dyer-o-dweeb (left) is using a pitching wedge, while I've plopped in the sand (right) and am forced to use a sand wedge. However, unlike the real thing, using a sand wedge is a doddle. Normally, this shot would take about 43 attempts.



Walk the dinosaur...



A nasty green pterodactyl-type creature. As you can see, our caveman ninja has had an eyeball-poppingly bad encounter with said winged beastie.

This is what's technically known as a ruddy great orange monster. Fortunately, this massive dinosaur is harmless – you can walk all over him!

This little stone-age dweeb carries a huge boulder. If you smack him with your axe, he drops it and it turns into a wheel which you can then hurl at your enemies.

A neanderthal bomb-dropping helicopter. Now, unless I'm mistaken, weren't these invented a bit nearer the 20th century?

The blurb that came with this game said it's fun, colourful and educational. Well, one out of three ain't bad. And correct

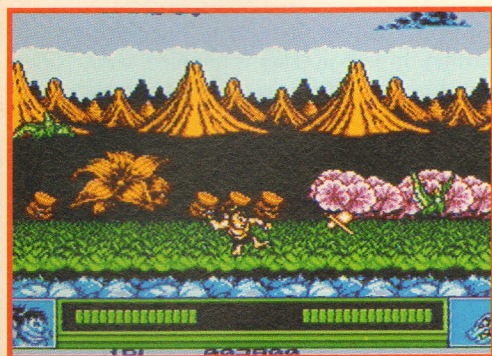
me if I'm wrong, but didn't the dinosaurs die out squillions of years before man first appeared on the earth? In which case this has about as much

educational merit as a bowl of porridge. Still, we're not here to talk education, we're here to review the game, so let's go!

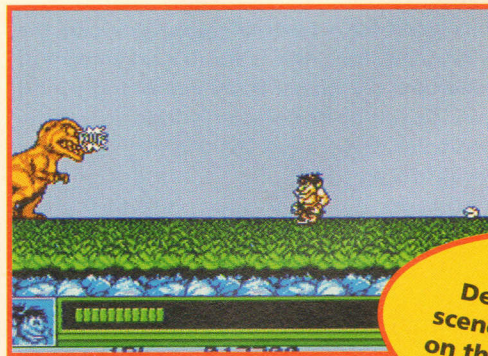
In Caveman Ninja disaster strikes when all the cavegirls get stolen by dinosaurs and hidden away somewhere. If the human race is to survive, you must beat the living daylight out of the prehistoric perpetrators of this terrible crime.

Now when you start out you'll probably think, 'Aha! A prehistoric Ghouls 'n' Ghosts clone!' But don't be fooled, there's *no way* this is as involved as that Capcom classic! OK, I've got to admit Caveman Ninja's graphics are excellent.

And the guardians are real mean – they provide the only real challenge in this



These pterodactyls are a major pig during the game – they swoop in, unexpected like, and do your poor old caveman in a treat.

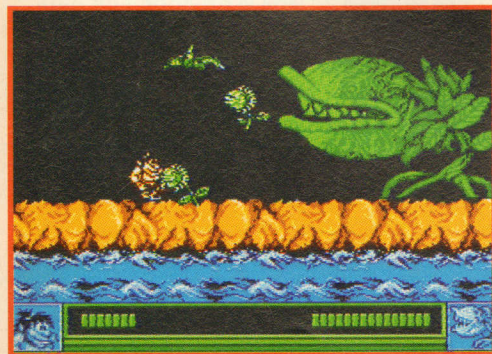


Yuk! This T-Rex appears to have a really nasty cold. Actually, that isn't a snot-glob but Cavey scoring a hit.

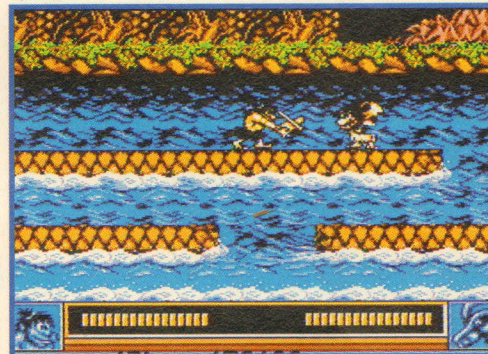
MEN
Dead-smart scrolling, juicy scenery and superb animation on the big baddies. The soundtrack's pretty hip, too!



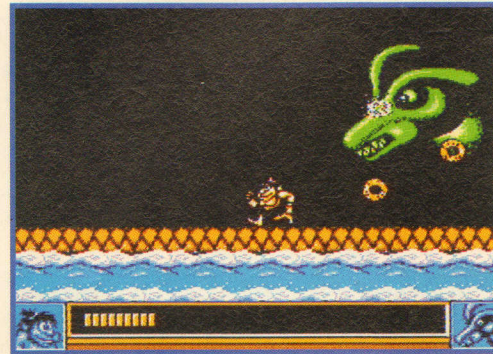
Watch out for the... erm. Well, I dunno what they are! I think they're prehistoric electric fish (or fish with lots of hair).



This caveman-eating plant guardian is one of the toughest you'll meet – and he's only in the middle of the second level. If you get too close it gobbles you up in one go!



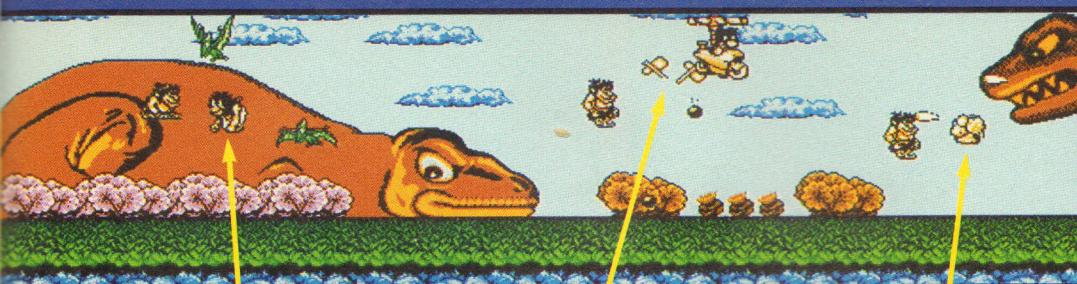
After defeating the plant guardian on his 253rd attempt, Cavey battles his way through even more hairy neanderthals on his way past torrents of water, until...



... He meets a Diplod-o-plaesio-finhead-o-saur, I think. Unlike the plant beast (which was a mid-level guardian), this end-of-level baddie is a piece of rock cake to destroy.

CAVEMAN

... Well, walk all over the dinosaur



The stone age equivalent of Thick – hairy and badly dressed. If you don't blot this beastie, he'll smash your head in.

Another attack chopper – only this time I've decided to combat the blighter with some ground-to-air axes.

Boss time! This monster spits out rocks which you have to jump over. Lob some axes in his gob and he'll soon be a sore dino!

game. But that's where the compliments end and the gripes begin.

For starters, each of the five major levels (which contain several stages) are very similar in content. There's only a limited amount of different opponents in the levels – once in a while a new adversary appears, like the shooting venus fly traps on level 2 – but the action doesn't change. This is made worse by the fact that the levels are also incredibly short – a couple of minutes running and shooting followed by a you-know-what!

What am I trying to say? Well, it's this: this game is badly structured. You have stupidly small levels, followed by easy end-of-level bosses, which

MONSTERS
The action and enemies are all a bit samey. Some bits are a doddle – some bits are frustratingly difficult

in turn are followed by incredibly difficult mid-level bosses in the next stage. Dumb, huh?

And so it goes on, with mid-level guardians being repeated, only a little harder to defeat each time you meet them.

There's a lot of game here I admit, and yes, there are some really tough challenges. But thanks to the almost random nature of the gameplay it gets very, very hard and very, very frustrating. Instead of learning new tricks you're left thinking 'Oh

When a game looks and sounds this good, it's a real shame that it's let down by weak gameplay



Final rating
67
Percent

gawd, not again!'. After a while, you just lose the urge to continue.

I have to say that you should only buy Caveman Ninja if you're a red-hot cart-killer hankering for a massive challenge! **STEVE**

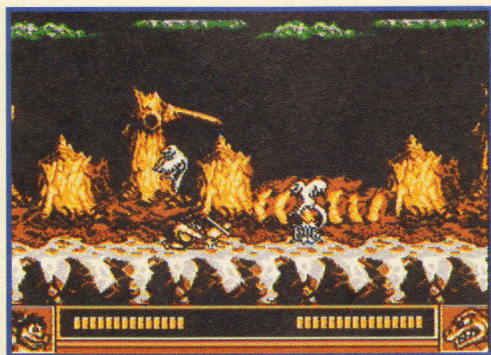
TOTAL!

For NES (1 player)

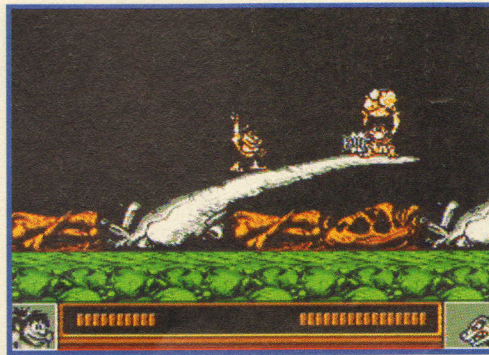
From Elite

Price £35

NINJA

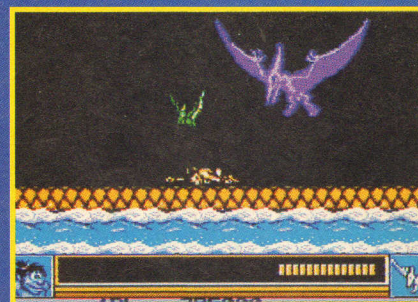


These flippin' flapping archaeopteryx-type birds are a real pain! They're tough blighters too, able to take several axe-hits before shuffling off their mortal coil.

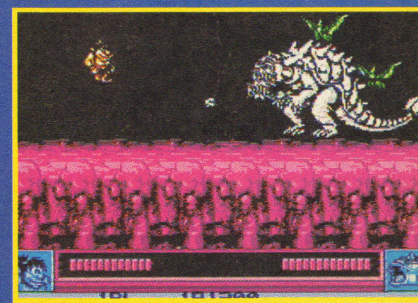


Move underneath these mammoth tusks and that hairy little gimp drops a boulder on your bonce. Mind you, he's so dim you can walk right up and bash him senseless.

Dino-wars



One of the meaner bosses is this huge pterodactyl. You meet two of these creatures during the game – and, like our hero, you'll probably die horribly.



Another guardian is this spiky armadillo-type monster. Here, Cavey has managed to get three axe-hits on him (that's why he's flashing white).

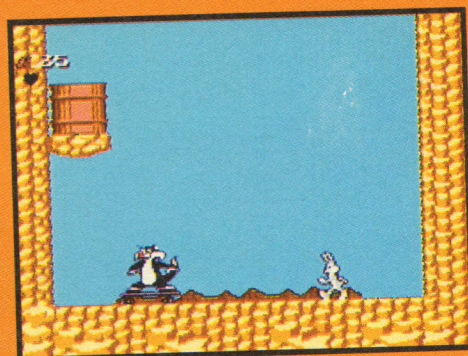
Nyah! What's up doc? (Er... not much, actually)



One of the more action-packed scenes: Bugs is in danger of getting his fluffy little rear scorched by a red-hot meteor!



Can you dig it? Er yes, as a matter of fact you can. If you're stuck then try burrowing, it's what rabbits are best at.



Sylvester's idea of decent Birthday present is to splatter poor Bugs' brains all over his skateboard wheels. Sicko!

For NES (1 player)

Do you know, I used to love Bugs Bunny? Saturday afternoon after Grandstand, cartoon-time on the TV, pizza and chips on my lap, and there he was. The smartest, most devious bunny on the face of the Earth, a rabbit ahead of his time!

Now I'm depressed. After trudging my way

From Kemco-Seika

through 50 levels of tedious, easy-to-play, bunny antics, I don't feel old Bugs and his creators Warner Brothers have been done much justice.

It's not that there's anything wrong with the

Price We'll let you know

plot, which has the makings of a real stonker. To celebrate his 50th (yes 50th!) birthday,

Bugs has been invited to a celebration party by some mystery hosts, and has to cross vast and dangerous landscapes to get there.

Real epic-type material eh?

Maybe another sprawling SMB 3-type

WABBITS
Bland samey gameplay with little graphical variety and awful scrolling - no challenge whatsoever

Bugs Bunny's

BIRTHDAY BLOWOUT

Wah! Lookee-here! Get a perfect score in the bonus round and you pick up 50 Bugs Bunnies to play with! (Now if that ain't dumb, I'm a normal human being)



a normal human being,

THE BONUS ROUND

17	16	18	2	12
23	15	19	9	21
20	7	1	8	
22	10	14	25	11
4	24	5	3	6

BALL

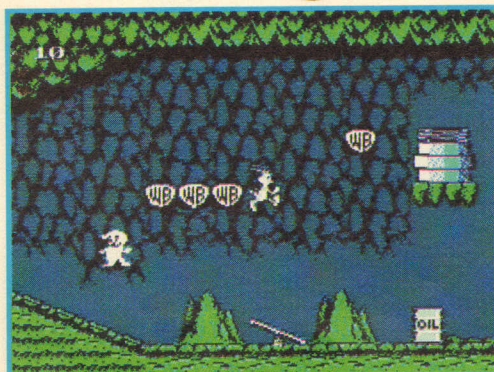
1ST	13
2ND	15
3RD	18
4TH	14
5TH	22

13
15

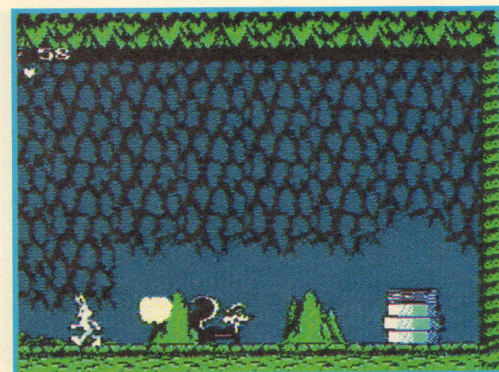
PERFECT -- 50UP !!!



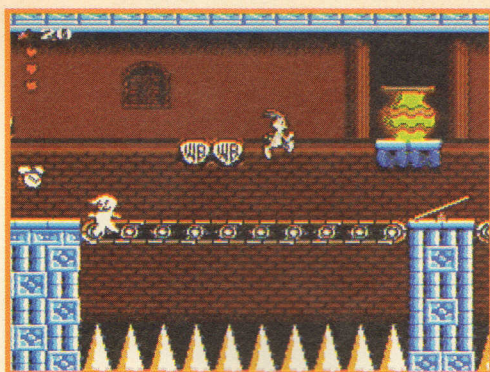
Dag rabbit! They don't build these log bridges like they used to! Poor old Bugs gets that nasty sinking feeling again.



Sproing! If Bugs blats the see-saw with his hammer, he gets catapulted through the air (shouldn't that be rabbitapulted?)



Well, that's very nice, that is! Bugs busts a gut to reach the end of the level only to have the skunk Pierre le Pew fart at him.



If Bugs gets spooked, head for the pot. It's not a rabbit trap, but a warpy-type thing...



... And as long as Daffy Duck doesn't stick his bill in, Bugs is in for a carrotty feast!

Well you'll have to go somewhere else – this has all the sprawl of SMB 3 but none of its genius. Bugs's so-called 'travels of trepidation' are a wearisome trudge over four *huge* main levels which are far too easy to be any sort of a challenge.

His only real task is to get from A to B collecting carrot icons, and fend off a glut of apologetic enemies about as menacing as my socks.

In fact the biggest set-backs are fixtures like the rotating platforms and disappearing lifts, but even these don't test your reflexes to the full.

Still, you've always got the end of level guardians to look forward to haven't you? Er, no. Although the guardians take the form of

Bugs's famous cartoon foes like Yosemite Sam, Sylvester the Cat, Tweety Pie and the Tasmanian Devil, the real opportunity for

some fast-paced cartoony antics has been missed. Add to that the stupid end-of-level bonus game where you pick up more lives than Madonna's had fellas, and you've got yourself a real donkey!

So what about the visuals? Well forget any comparison to those high quality cartoons. Although the Bugs character is decent, be prepared for him to screen-shake his way through empty landscapes!

Well that's it then. It's too big, it's too easy, and the life bonus system is so generous it's pukesome.

RABBITS.
Characters are quite appealing. This is a massive story probably simple enough for very, VERY young gamers

This is a badly missed opportunity – a sprawling platform 'romp' with nothing to say for itself, apart from 'don't buy me!'

TOTAL!

Looks



Cartoon characters are OK but the scenery is garish and the scrolling is poop

Sounds



A dull, repetitive drone that gave Steve five consecutive nervous breakdowns

Gameplay



Fine for ten minutes but it just goes on, and on, and on... then on a bit more

Life span



It'll be a race between finishing it after only a few goes and getting bored first



Final rating

31

Percent

What a rat you're thinking, but it goes like this: I know the programmers have tried hard here to create a BIG game, but their efforts have amounted to very little. This is only fit for the under threes.

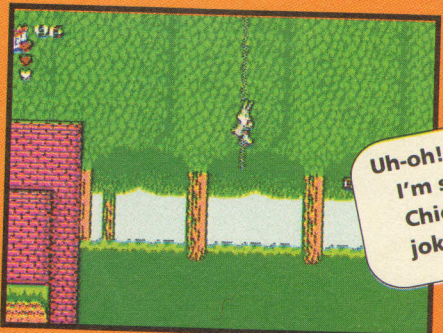
ANDY

TOTAL!

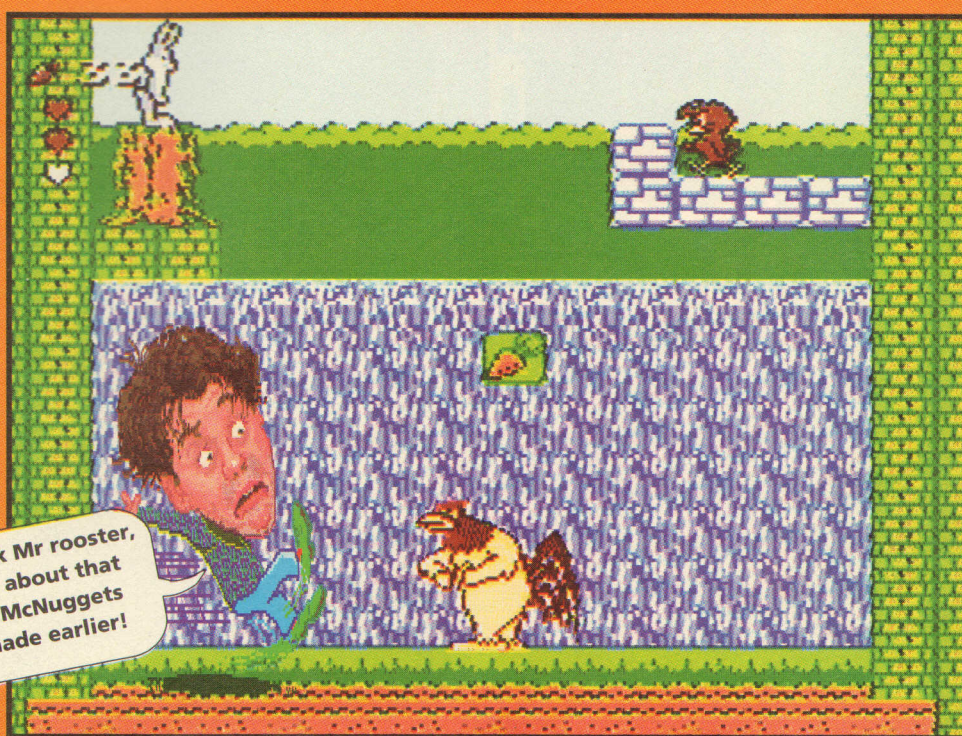
If Bugs goes down to the woods today...



'Mind the spider Bugs!' (Nyah, he's a doddle to avoid, like everything else)

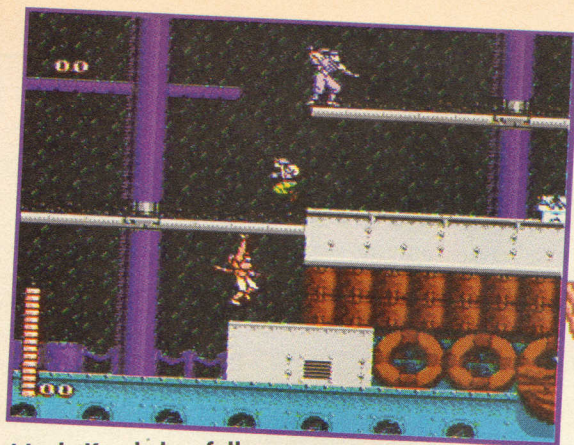


Bugs goes ape when it comes to vine-swinging through the woods. (If you ask me he's just a dope-on-a-rope.)



Uh-oh! Look Mr rooster, I'm sorry about that Chicken McNuggets joke I made earlier!

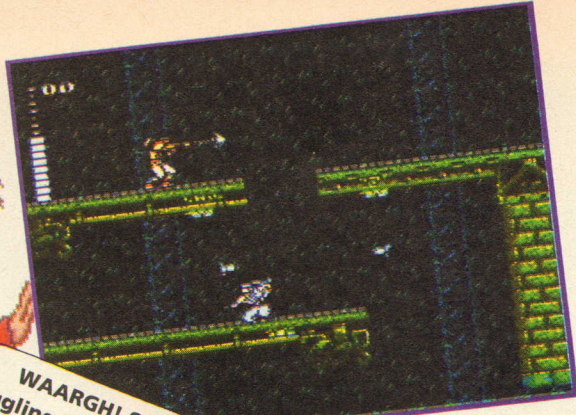
I say, boy, I say! Well, rub butter on my buns and slap me in the oven at gas mark 6 for two hours, if it isn't Foghorn Leghorn! Oddly enough, to defeat him, all you have to do is hop over and belt his little lad over the head with your mallet a couple of times!



Disaster! Lady Kaede has fallen for the old 'superglue on the pole' trick. Hopefully the rain will wash it away allowing her to continue with the mission...



WAARGH! Stop jiggling the page you moron! You're making the pictures fall over!



Hayate (the bloke in blue) ducks to avoid a couple of homing missiles, while Kaede attacks the raindrops (she's a bit past it).



... Ah, good. She's free at last and is about to wreak revenge on the first level boss - Bostik Barry, expert in adhesives, glues and double-sided sticky tape - the fiend!

Look at the screen shots tastefully arranged on these pages, and you might be forgiven for thinking 'Oh no, not another Shadow Warriors-style platform-jumping, baddie-slashing ninja beat 'em up'. But you'd only be *half* right.

True, Blue Shadow *does* look as though it's built up entirely of ideas and designs from dozens of earlier titles.

The plot isn't very original either. Basically, it involves you (and a chum, if you want) taking control of one of a pair of ninja warriors on a mission to eliminate the madman who has taken control of the largest city in America (sounds familiar?).

As you might expect, this involves lots of

running and leaping around through five different scenes, each with several sub-levels, and chopping up lots of nasty minions of evil with your katana, kusarigama, and shurikens. All of these can be powered up by collecting goodies hidden around the levels in weapon chest-things (yeah, it sounds very familiar).

So, what separates Blue Shadow from the run-of-the-mill ninja-type beat 'em up?

Well, I'm not quite sure, to tell you the truth. There isn't really anything you can put your finger on which makes Blue Shadow stand out from the crowd, but by some strange quirk of fate, it's just *really* good fun to play.

First off, it's nowhere near as frustrating as Shadow Warriors where the attacks are so random

I luv luv LURV the looks on this! The same-time two-player mode is just wonderful

For NES (1-2 players)

From Taito

Price £35

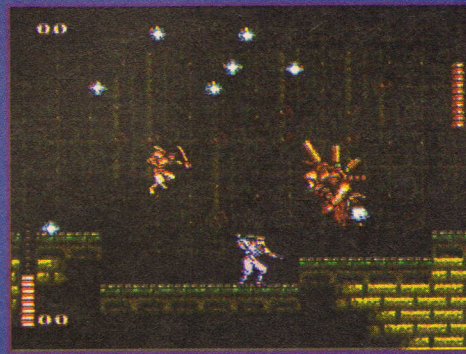
BLUE SHADOW



Down in the sewers on level two. HA! If that baddie thinks our dynamic duo are going to fall for the 'Watch out behind you - dreaded pink monkey of doom!' trick... er... he'd be absolutely bang on.



'Ooh! A circus big wheel,' cries Hayate and jumps for joy. This is a bad move because: 1) If you jump around lots you will almost certainly plummet to your doom. 2) That's exactly what he does moments later.



Miraculously our two hero-Ninjas survive to confront the evil Missileman. 'Ooh, dandelion flowers!' cries Hayate and promptly gets blown into small pieces. (I'm a bit worried about our Hayate.)



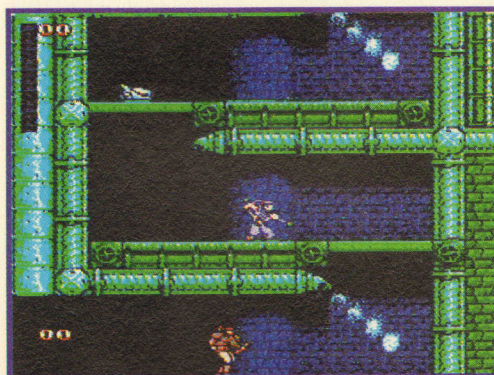
Now there's something you don't see very often: a brown somersaulting underwater ninja. (Actually you see lots in this game.)

you always end up getting hit. Here, when you do get hit by a baddie, it's probably your own fault, not the game just throwing something at you for no reason.

Blue Shadow's pace is frantic throughout. With other games, terminal boredom can set in after you've hacked up your 200th identical nasty. But not here because the enemy attacks are constantly varied!

The scenery's imaginative too – you'll have to negotiate platforms on big spinning wheels and strange multiple-lift formations – amongst other things – on your way to the end of the final level.

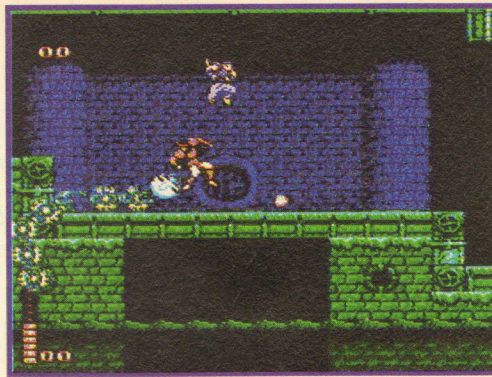
SHUDDERS
Lots of continues and a mere five levels make for a pretty easy ride and a short lifespan



'Stop... can you hear a sort of metallic scurrying sound?' says Kaede. 'Don't be daft.' says Hayate, jumps up a platform and gets nipped in the bud by a robot rat.



The brave Hayate forcefully thrusts his sickle and chain weapon towards the approaching insectoid. Ah... erm, perhaps a bit too forcefully. The end comes off and embeds itself in the wall.



'Uh-oh!' cries Hayate, 'you'd better move sharpish if you don't want that enormous robo-snake to bite y– Oh. Too late.'

Unfortunately, mention of the final level brings me to Blue Shadow's major failing – it's far too easy. In common with many

games, you're supplied with a generous five continues at the start, and with the game only having five, fairly short, main levels, it won't take a major effort to complete!

I reckon the average player will probably get only about a week's solid play out of Blue Shadow, so if you're a platform wizard, it won't offer much of a challenge.

Yowser! A sexy-looking and very playable platform hack 'em up, with a great two-player option. It's just a bit too easy for my liking

TOTAL!

Looks

■ Luvly stuff, with big, smooth-moving graphics and some original ideas too

Sounds

■ Pretty ordinary music and FX, but nothing that'll burst yer ear drums

Gameplay

■ You've seen it all before, but it's not often this slick, fast and enjoyable

Life span

■ Me an' Thicky got halfway through it on our first go, so it's quite easy to complete



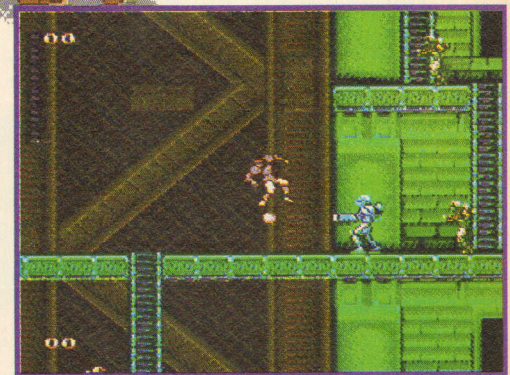
Final rating
74
Percent

Having said that, if this is the kind of game you're into, you won't find a better cartridge for your NES this side of Low G Man. **STEVE**

TOTAL!



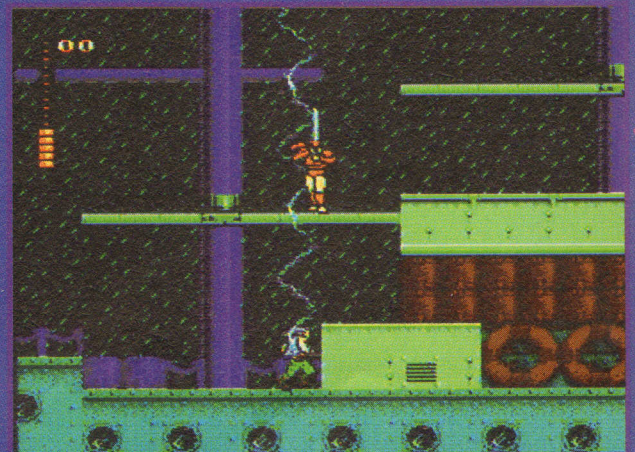
'Hello, is the number 93 that goes past the chippy?' Oh dear... while dim old Hayate haggles over the fare, poor old Kaede gets a flamethrower up the, erm, exhaust.



After much hard ninjering, the battle is finally lost. With Hayate long-since demised, Lady Kaede takes the final bullet and dies with a blood-curdling 'eep!'. Er...

TOTAL!
TACTIX

The manual fails to mention that if you have enough energy you can unleash a 'smart' weapon. Hold down button B and push up on the joypad. Keep them held and a few moments later a wave of energy destroys all the baddies on screen!



MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

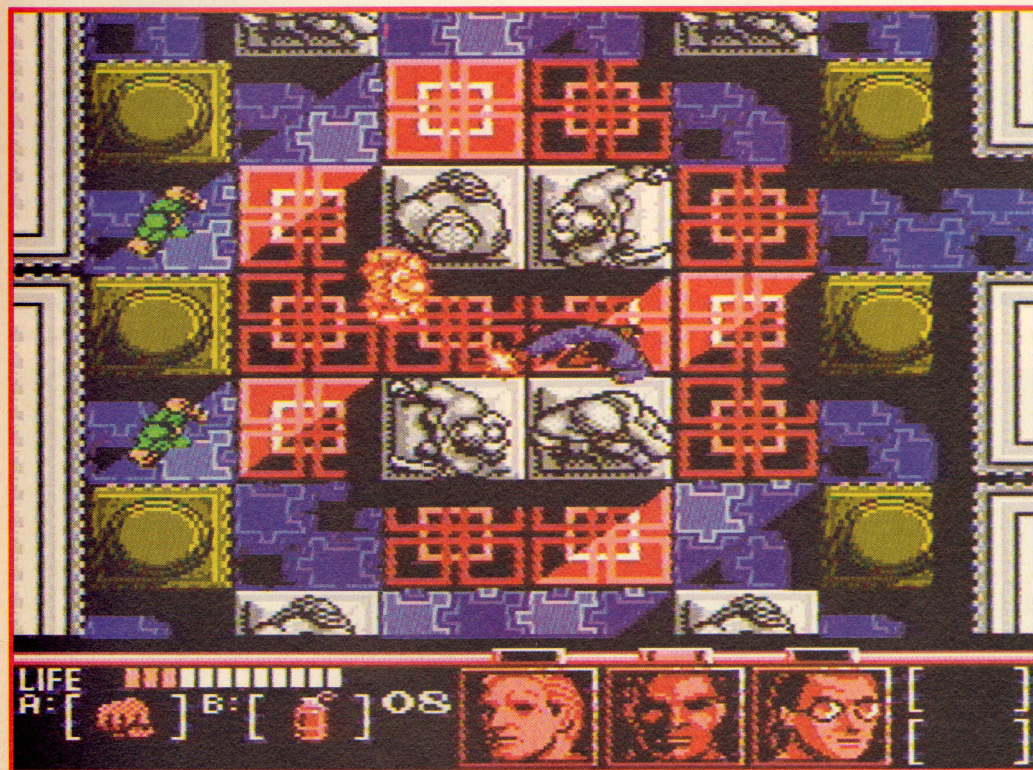
For NES (1 player)

From Palcom

Price £40

Thicky, your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to become an intelligent human being

Duh! Talk about mission impossible. How can I bluff my way out of this one?



A stroll around the museum has been spoilt by over-protective guards with machine guns.

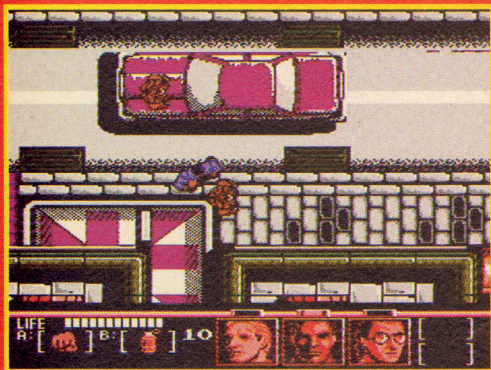
Ask your Dad about this famous 1960s TV series and the old man's memories will come flooding back: how chips were 1p a bag then and there was no such thing as football hooliganism, and er... can he have a go on your NES please?

That's because Mission Impossible opens with one of the best intro sequences you're ever likely to see on a NES. To the accompaniment of its famous theme tune, a fuse slowly burns down across the screen past lots of big ID cards of all



Don't explode, I didn't finish reading where I had to go- BOOM! Oh. Er, right then, I'll start at Blackpool and take it from there.

Didn't we have a luvverly time...



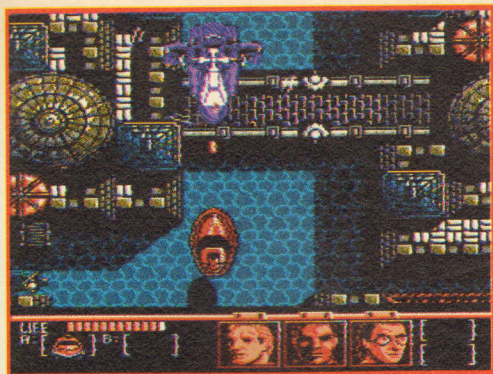
Mmm, Blackpool's changed a bit since I was last here. Er, excuse me, How do I get to the tower? THUD! Oh dear, he's been run over.



Let me see, that dodgy-looking policeman said take the next left into Instant Death Alley. I wonder why it's called that? Ah!



I dunno, all I wanted was a nice, quiet game of pool and this happens. It's only a game you know. Right, take that you loser.



These hire-boats are a real hoot. But I think my hours up, 'cos the owner's urging me back with his attack helicopter... Er.

the characters, while the title scrolls across in massive writing without a hint of a flicker.

Start the game proper, and your mission instructions appear in traditional manner, in the form of a printout which ends with the words, 'This message will self-destruct in five seconds' (which it then does). It might not seem important, but this is the kind of thing which can set up a game with a brilliant atmosphere and make you feel as though you're really involved in the action. A great start, then, but what's the game actually like to play?

Well, glad you asked. Mission Impossible is a game like no other we've

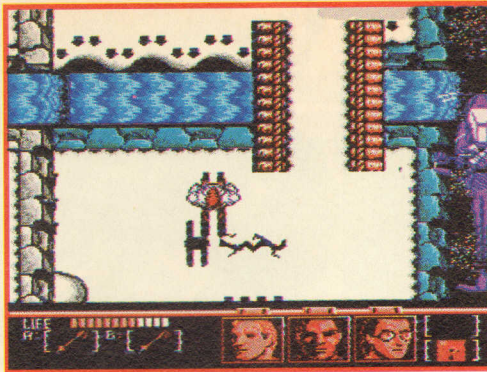


I've obtained my one-day bus pass but from what this bloke says they must be pretty hard to get hold of. I'll keep it hidden.

... The day we went to, er, Blackpool?



Blimey, all this sight-seeing has made me want to go to the loo. These steps look like they lead to a local public convenience...



Question is, how many more crap, Blackpool-related jokes can I make?

seen on the NES. It's sort of like a cross between Gauntlet and Zelda in parts, but other sections are almost like bits of Skate Or Die.

Sounds confusing? Don't worry, for the most part you won't even have to read the instructions. Your mission is to rescue a top scientist from an evil organisation bent on world destruction. This you do across a mixture of simple maze-exploring, beat 'em up and shoot 'em up game styles, with a bit of problem-solving thrown in for good measure.

You control a party of three heroes, each with

SELF DESTRUCTS

The overhead-view fighting and exploring bits are a tad slow. The large missions do seem to drag on a bit

SECRET WEAPONS
Superb visuals throughout. Good mix of thinking and action, excellent presentation, and plenty of depth



Ah, that's why the barman was so cagey. These passes are nicked. Still, I'll just replace the photos, no-one will ever know.

different abilities and special weapons which you have to call on at certain times to get past particular obstacles. This adds an element of planning and strategy to your mission – for example, it's important to avoid losing important characters before certain sections otherwise you'll be completely stuck.

Combine this with tough gameplay and it makes Mission Impossible a serious challenge: you'll hardly ever come up against the same kind of bad guy twice in a row, which means you really have to be on your toes all the time. Even choosing the

wrong type of character at one point can make all the difference between glorious success and humiliating failure.

All this might sound a bit off-putting, but the great thing about Mission Impossible is that it's loads of fun to play – even if you're not really taking it seriously. After

you've run around aimlessly beating up enemies and escaping the odd trap for a while, though, you start to want to play the game properly and before you know it, you're completely hooked.

The varied action (no two levels in a row are in the same style) stops you from getting bored and a neat password system stops you from getting frustrated. I really enjoyed Mission Impossible and as long as you don't expect lightning-speed, fire button-hammering action from it, you will too. **STEVE**

TOTAL!

TOTAL!

Looks

■ Stylish and different, with some really big sprites shifting around at speed

Sounds

■ Groovy rendition of the TV theme tune and meaty in-game zaps and bangs

Gameplay

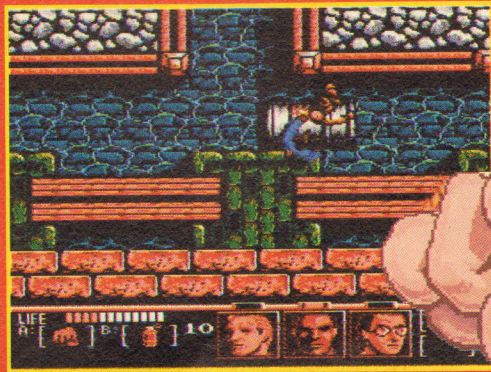
■ More like an old eight-bit computer game in design, but still great fun

Life span

■ Pretty lengthy, but the password system will help you finish it eventually

Varied and involving game in a style you won't have seen before, and very slickly put together too. Not entirely action-packed, but it's fine!

Final rating
79
Percent



... I don't think this is Blackpool after all. Everyone's really unfriendly, they all speak Russian and I haven't seen the sea once.

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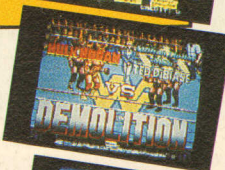
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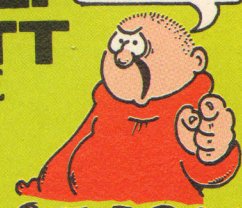
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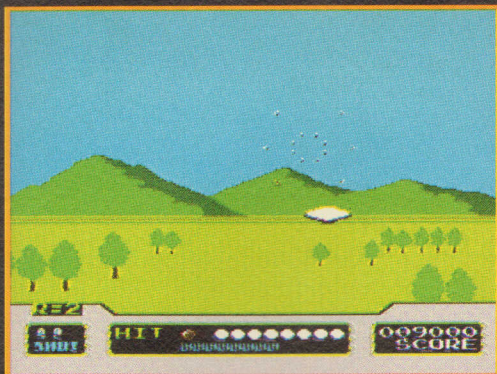


**0839654302
IF YOU DARE!**



COME ON! I'LL TAKE Y'ALL ON!

In possibly the first (and last) in-depth feature, Thicky Dyer unveils the truth behind his fearsome light gun, the best Zapper games to play and the ones to chuck out (or chuck over).



For more of a challenge, try the clay pigeon shoot. As you get further into the game, the discs get catapulted into the air faster.

your head. If you get the game free in the action set, fair enough, but I don't recommend buying it.

TOTAL RATING **43%**

BAYOU BILLY

PRICE £35

FROM Konami

Time to laugh your lingerie off folks, this is one of the most vile collections of dire game styles you ever did cast your eyes upon.

The programmers have tried to rip-off three distinct game types and made a complete #2*! up of it. Not only is it useless for Zappers, it'll annoy the hell out of joypad players too! I'd rather not review this one, but Steve *made* me.

Game type one is a scrolling beat 'em up a little like Double Dragon. Now, I'm not a big



Double Dragon fan, but compared to this game it's an absolute stonker. For a start the hero, Bayou Billy, can only perform three moves, which are punch, kick and jump-kick. All these moves contain a massive two frames of animation, so is the movement convincing and realistic? Is Steve hairy? Are Benetton adverts tasteful? Ha!

Worse still is the driving section, done in the style of Road Blasters. The road is wibbly and jerky, the enemy cars and helicopters look awful and if you fire grenades at the choppers then move

around, the grenade moves around as well!

But of course this is a Zapper game and we've seen very little Zapper action so far. Of the nine levels only two feature the Zapper and these are both Operation Wolf clones in which the jungle scenery scrolls past and commandos drop from the trees and fire at you. All you need to do is use the Zapper to kill them before they kill you.

These are the strongest of the three game types but even then they're dull and badly implemented. Basically, Bayou Billy is an embarrassment.

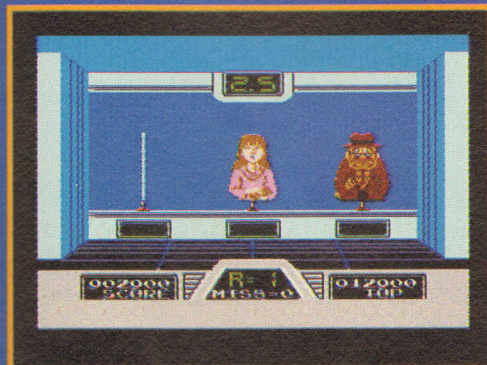
TOTAL RATING **22%**

them until they eventually come to rest on one of four platforms, each with a different points rating. Everything's just dandy if you put the gun about an inch from the screen, but sit six feet away and you're doomed!

The difficulty of this section is no bad thing because the other games on the cart take a while to get tricky and that makes them repetitive.

All in all, this is pretty good but unsophisticated gameplay – one for the youngsters.

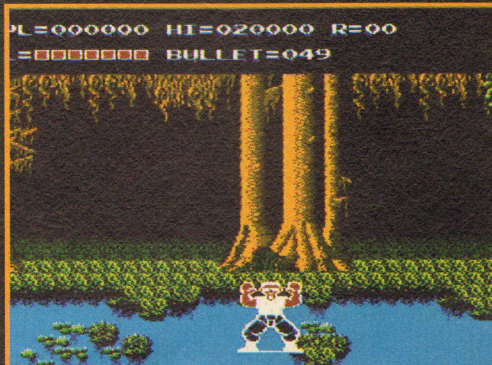
TOTAL RATING **64%**



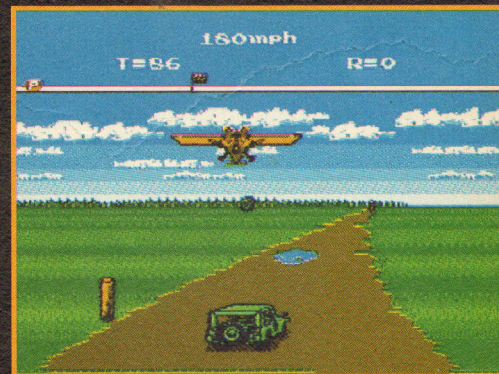
Ha, ha! It is I, 'Light Gun Larry', and I am here to rid the world of librarians in pink mohair jumpers and old age pensioners.



The boring beat 'em up bit. Your opponents are like zombies and wander to and fro, unaware of your vast range of two attacks.



The shoddy shooty level. If you do well, The Hammer performs a number called 'Ya shouldn't touch this (with a barge-pole)'.



The dull driving section. The ultra-smooth road movement is surpassed only by the amazingly realistic aircraft. Yeah, right.



At last! I've been hit. A few more blasts like that and I'll be put out of my misery for ever. Better still, I'll just switch off the NES.

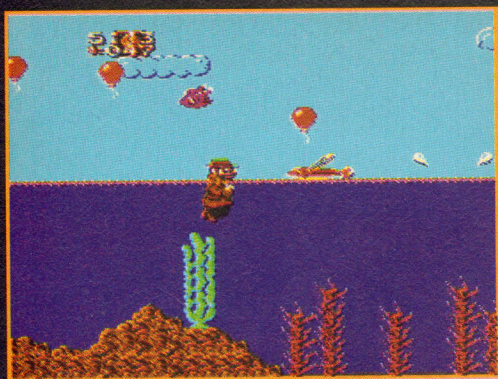
Shoot down the shops and buy one!

ZAPPER LIGHT GUN

PRICE £30

So what happens if you didn't get the Action Set but you still fancy a crack at the Zapper games? Well you'll be glad to hear that you can buy the light gun separately for a mere bagatelle. And if you don't own a bagatelle, you can always offer the shop £30 instead. For this small(ish) fee, you get the light gun, a box, a bit of plastic wrapping, a set of instructions and you might even find a bit of polystyrene thrown in, too.





There's many a good tuna played on an old fiddle. Mmm... shoot the gilled-one before Mr Stevenson becomes a fish supper.



One of the trickier sections. The hero climbs the hill by himself, so concentrate on the rocks.



GUNSHOE

PRICE £30

FROM Nintendo

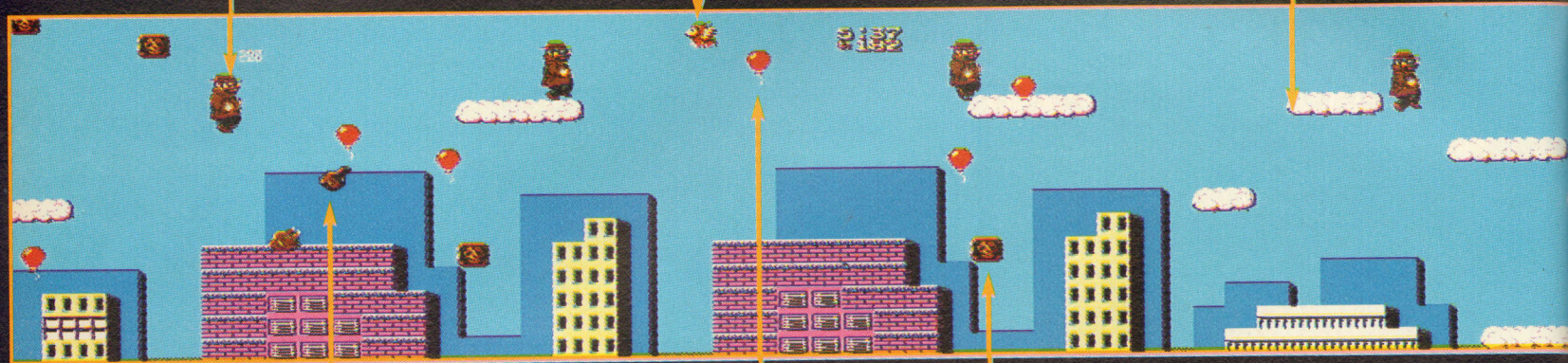
This has to be the strangest Zapper game available. It looks like a regular platform game with the main character (a detective by the name of Mr Stevenson) moving from left to right over a variety of hazard-filled levels to rescue his kidnapped daughter Jennifer.

But what makes it odd is the fact that you get Mr Stevenson to jump over obstacles by shooting the poor gimpy. The more

This is Mr Stevenson. He has the strange talent of being able to fly when shot!

Shoot the bird, collect the remains and you get extra points.

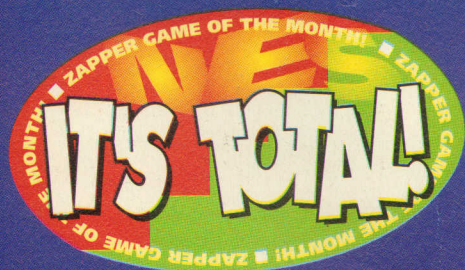
Keeping the hero airborne uses up ammo, so let him walk along the clouds wherever possible.



Mr Stevenson can't take his drink so shoot this before the hero hits the bottle and dies.

Collect the balloons for extra points.

These skull icons are deadly so avoid 'em at all costs.



TO THE EARTH

PRICE £30

FROM Nintendo

'Good morning Captain, I'm afraid I have some bad news. The earth is being attacked by aliens so I'd like you to leap aboard your astrocruiser and

destroy these hideous space villains. Here take this weapon.'

'But it's a light gun fashioned from vile orange plastic.'

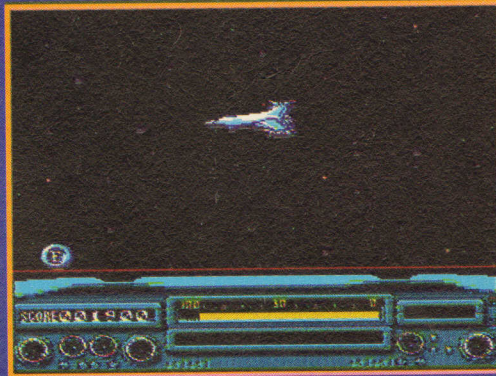
'Er yes, sorry. It's the only thing I could lay my hands on.'

'Thanks, sir (you senile old fart!).'

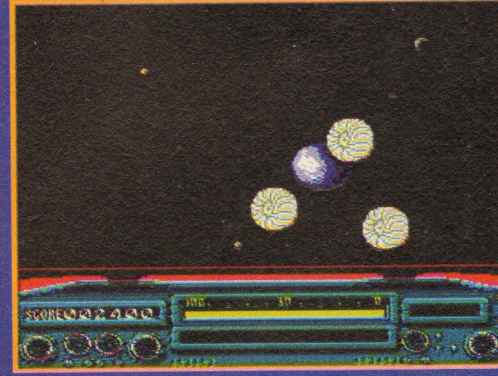
Hurrah! A proper shoot 'em up for the light gun, set in space an' everyfink. There are no complex missions, just straightforward alien-



The alien ships themselves don't harm you, it's their missiles you have to watch out for. Here, I've shot the ship and missed the missile which is a stupidly wrong thing to do. Fortunately my energy is still high.



Still, even if you get it all completely wrong and lose a huge amount of energy, most stages are followed by this. It's a friendly ship which re-energises you if you shoot that accompanying icon at the bottom.



After destroying all the attack waves around Uranus, it's time to meet the fearsome Tri-Opticon. Fast-firing is vital. If you let up on the trigger for too long, any segments you've destroyed will re-appear.

you shoot him the more he jumps so you can actually keep him airborne if you're quick.

Plotting a path like this is all well and good but in addition there are enemies and deadly objects which either fly at you or get in the way so you also have to shoot these while manoeuvring the hero at the same time.

So does this oddball approach work? Well, yes, mostly. The problem is that squinting down the gun barrel like a demented fool for more than 15 minutes gets a bit wearing. And because of the big levels and lack of a password option, Gumshoe will take a lot longer than that to get through, even if you know it like the back of your hand.

Zapper games will always be limited because the light gun can never be as accurate or give you as many options as a joystick. But even so, Gumshoe has managed to steer away from the repetitive style of Duck Hunt and still be a reet good laugh.

TOTAL RATING **75%**



I told you about those bottles. Mr Stevenson becomes yet another victim of the evils of drink.

Action station! Light gun at the ready!

NINTENDO ACTION SET PRICE £100

If you already own an NES you might as well ignore this, er, unless of course you want another one. Either way, if you're thinking of getting an

NES why not stump up an extra £20 and get the Zapper light gun bundled with it. For £100 you get an NES, two joypads, the Zapper and a two-game cartridge featuring Super Mario Brothers and

Duck Hunt. By doing it this way, you effectively get Duck Hunt and the Zapper for only £20 whereas if you bought it separately the gun alone would cost you £30. Gosh, what a barg'.



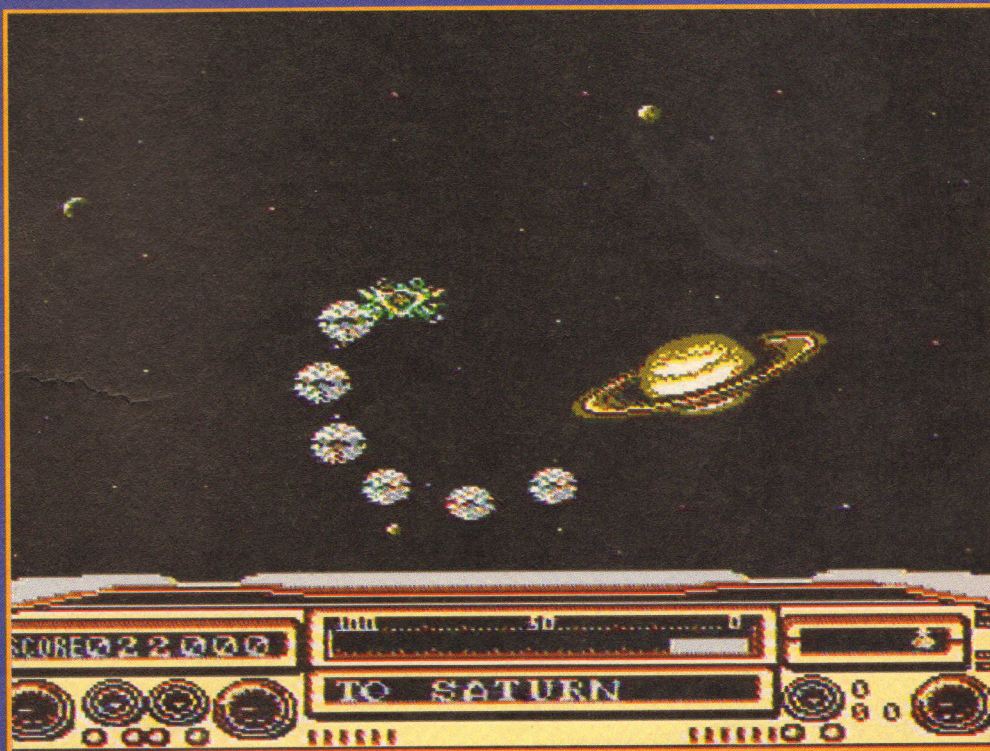
bashing as you make your way past the outer planets, blasting alien attack waves in order to reach Earth and save the day.

But why is this the best Zapper game of the bunch? Because it's a fully-fledged game in every sense of the word. Instead of being an over-simple introduction to the light gun, like Duck Hunt, or an over-complex attempt at something different, like Gumshoe, this is a proper shoot 'em up which just happens to use a gun rather than a joystick.

It has wave after wave of different aliens, bosses, smart bombs and power-ups and even though it's really detailed, everything moves at gut-wrenching speed. In some places you even have to recognise which are the more dangerous targets and take them out first.

Zapper games don't have to be paper-thin in content or unimaginative, and here's the proof. To The Earth works really well with the light gun, but it's real strength is that even if you took away the Zapper, it would still be a slick piece of programming in it's own right.

TOTAL RATING **82%**



While cruising around saturn looking for astro-babes, I inadvertently stumble across the Zambuka. Don't ask for a date, this girl's only into really short term relationships.

YOU LOVE US!

In the attitude-packed March issue, we look deep into Ocean, peek at the diary of *Mega lo Mania 2* and give all the new releases the praise or just desserts they deserve. Can you contain yourself for another two weeks when the April issue hits the streets?

HARLEQUIN

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OCEAN'S NEW

STARTS THIS MONTH: DIARY OF A GAME! PLATFORM GAME BUYER'S GUIDE

Review info

Dear, oh dear! You saw it there on the shelf and couldn't wait to get it home and play it. But horror of horrors, it's a steaming great pile of dung. To save you wasting your money on sad little games, try out our reviews. Reading the whole thing is your best bet but if you want to take a few short cuts, just scan the 'thumbs up' and 'thumbs down' bits first.



GOOD THINGS

If certain aspects of the game are particularly stonk-o-spiff then we'll tell you all about it in here...



BAD THINGS

...Whereas this little space is reserved for the more poop-o-plop parts of the game

It takes all sorts to make a world though, so while one person looks for good visuals, another might want snazzy sounds. That's why we separately rate graphics, sound, gameplay and lifespan in the box near the end of the review. Green is good, red is bad. Still unsure? Try the reviewer's comment and an overall rating then.

TOTAL!

Looks



Does it turn you on or off? This is where we tell you how sexy a game looks

Sounds



Does the speaker serenade you? Or does the sound chip cheese you off? Read this!

Gameplay



The important bit. It could look and sound great but bad gameplay is the pits

Life span

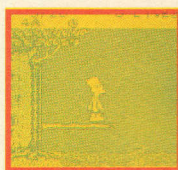


A game could be brilliant, but if it's too easy, you ain't gonna get much out of it

OK, me and Steve are as thick as two planks, but this is where we try to sum up our feelings about a game as best our tiny brains allow

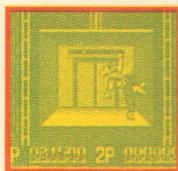
Final rating
74
Percent

This month



Bart Simpson Page 50

Disaster! Barty-baby is sent to summer camp and has to share a room with his worst enemy, Nelson the bully. It's your job to get him through this vicious vacation, and you'll love every minute of it.



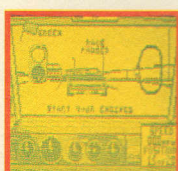
Double Dragon II Page 52

Not all games are the same... except for all the Double Dragon ones. Billy and his brother resurface in another chapter of this tired old beat 'em up formula. And with infinite continues it ain't too challenging either.



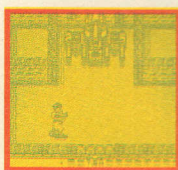
Burai Fighter Page 54

A surprisingly good shoot 'em up with eight-way shooting and vast levels that scroll in all directions. If you want a game full of gorgeous robo-mutoid aliens and stonking great power ups, this is it.



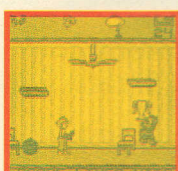
Days Of Thunder Page 55

Whizz round a boring circular-type track in a flash car and try not to get trashed by the other competitors. The perfect recipe for a really dull game, but don't worry, this isn't as nearly as bad as the NES version.



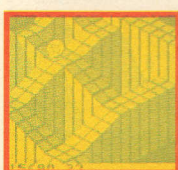
Fortified Zone Page 56

Two special agent-type soldiers, one male and one female, go in search of love, long life, happiness and huge amounts of senseless violence. But whether they find it over only four short levels remains to be seen.



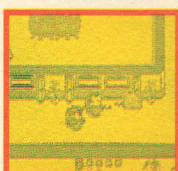
Home Alone Page 58

'Ya had enough? Or are ya hungry for more?' This arcade adventure is about as pleasant and interesting as Macaulay Culkin, the obnoxious little upstart who starred in the hit film of the same name. Puke!



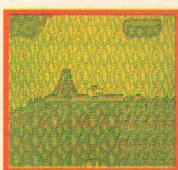
Marble Madness Page 59

Take the NES version of Marble Madness, take out the last level and a few of the challenges, spice up a few other areas and what have you got? A sub-standard version of a decidedly geriatric game.



Ghostbusters 2 Page 60

Control two 'busters as they run around haunted buildings shooting and collecting spooks. There's plenty of action and some really tricky end-of-level challenges. Who ya gonna call? Er, the Nintendo hotline probably.



Sneaky Snakes Page 62

This is a sort of Game Boy version of the brilliant Snake Rattle 'N' Roll. But with the 3D perspective gone, the play area is horribly restrictive and the whole thing is a disappointment when compared to the NES version.



WWF Superstars Page 64

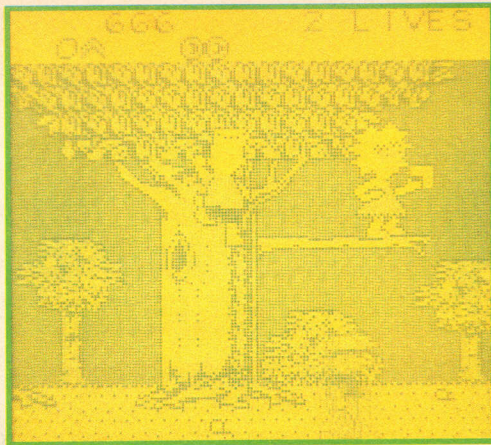
Considerably better than Wrestlemania challenge on the NES, but again, you can finish it in a day. Wrestle freaks turn to page 64. Normal, balanced, intelligent human beings don't. You have been warned.

TOTAL!

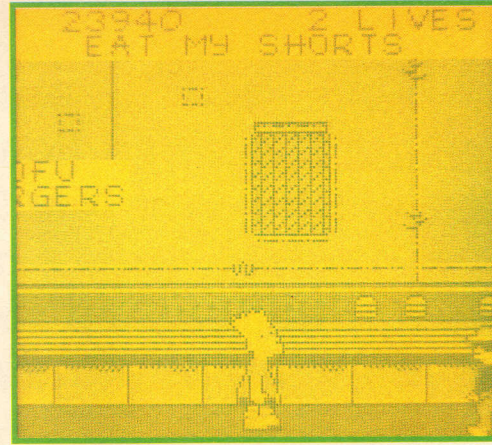
GAME BOY REVIEWS



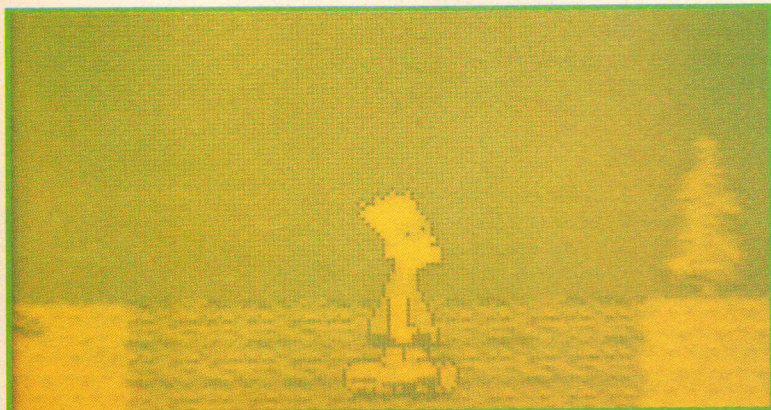
This is the geek in charge of Camp Deadly – Commandant ‘Ironfist’ Burns. He hates Bart, he hates his sister, and he’s trying to make sure they both have a miserable time – starting with a game of ‘Capture The Flag’.



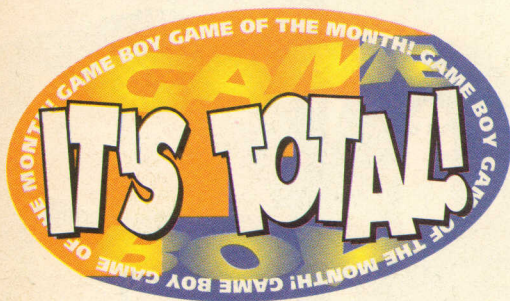
At the start of Bart’s one-man battle against the rest of the camp, his only defence is to gob at people. Thankfully, he soon finds his sister who’s brought a stack of boomerangs so Bart can at least go down fighting!



A couple of captured flags later, Bart breaks for lunch. Since his ‘meal’ consists of Tofu burgers, broccoli spears and apples, Bart’s more interested in hurling the stuff at his opponents than in actually eating the crap!



Bart takes the easy way across the river aboard a floating log. He’s too cool to swim, and if he gets his threads wet, it’s bye-bye Bart!



For Game Boy (1 player)
From Acclaim **Price £25**

Escape From

After seeing off the evil Space Mutants, Bartholomew J Simpson should have been looking forward to a nice, quiet summer, away from the rigours of school, homework and saving the planet from alien invaders.

Unfortunately for Bart, his loving parents have booked him and sis Lisa into a summer camp. But this is no ordinary summer camp... this is Camp Deadly (shock!). Run by Ironfist Burns (gasp!). With Nelson the bully and his cronies as bunkmates (double eek! with a side order of aarrgh!).

As you can imagine, the only thing Bart wants to do at summer camp is get out, escape, go home and not be there. And you’ve got to help him.

Just like his mutant-mashing adventure on the NES, this is a jump, shoot ‘n’ collect ‘em up, where Bart scurries from left to right through long scrolling scenes. He can jump over obstacles and baddies, climb trees and throw things to protect himself from the constant bully-bashing (luckily Lisa smuggled some boomerangs in for just such an occasion!).

Before attempting his escape via Mount Deadly and the local nuclear power plant (owned by Ironfist Burns’ uncle Monty), Bart has to survive the dreaded camp food and get through a deadly game of ‘Capture The Flag’. And, once again, it’s Bart versus everyone else!

Well, no marks awarded for original gameplay here, but there’s something very un-put-downable about Escape From Camp Deadly. The controls are nice and responsive and once you learn when to attack, when to jump and when to run away, you’ll soon start making some decent progress.

Also, the difficulty level is well graded so that almost every time you play Bart gets just that bit nearer to freedom,

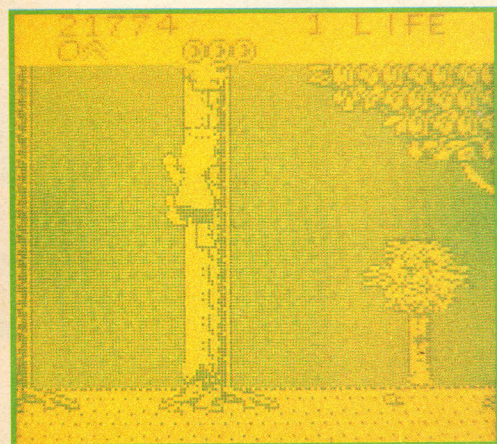
making you want to have one more go.

Hit points also help the playability because you die in bits rather than getting snuffed out in one go. Bart has plenty of chances to pick up extra hit points, so with careful playing you can come back from the brink of death.

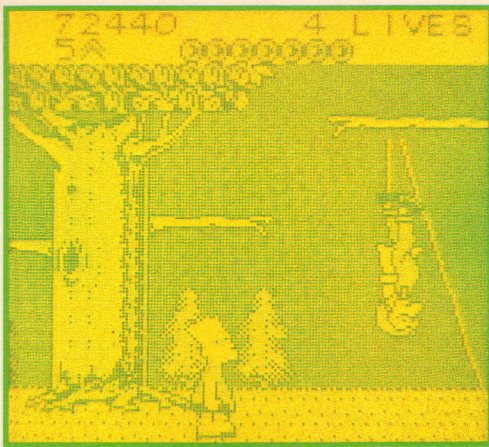
I don’t think you’ll be playing Bart Simpson for months and months – it’s not a massive mission –

BOOMERANGS
Gameplay is simple, but well thought out and has some nice touches.
Great sound, smart scenics

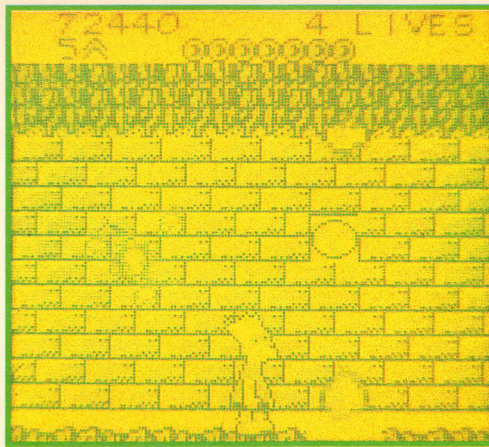
BEES
Good gamers will probably romp through it!
Not much here to challenge the grey cells



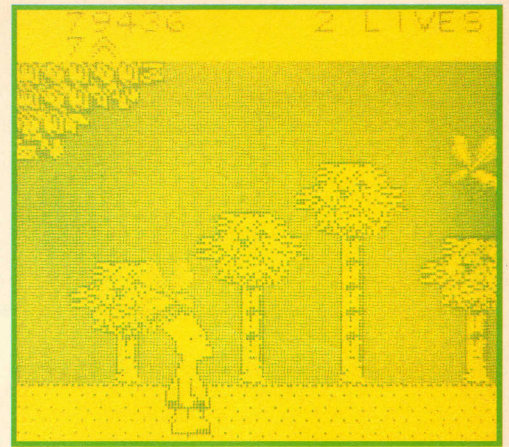
For some reason, the coolest kid in Springfield has a strange liking for Krusty the Clown – some sad old gimmer in make-up. Anyway, whenever Bart sees a Krusty face he should collect it for an extra life!



Back in the great outdoors, Bart finds a trap set to catch Madman Mort the axe murderer. (I'm not sure whether this is Mort or not, but a well-placed boomerang soon gets rid of this bloke).



Ironfist Burns' uncle Monty owns the nearby nuclear chemical plant, so Ironfist lets him dump his waste in the woods (don't do this at home, kids). Here Bart has to avoid the mutant spiders and globs of toxic sludge.

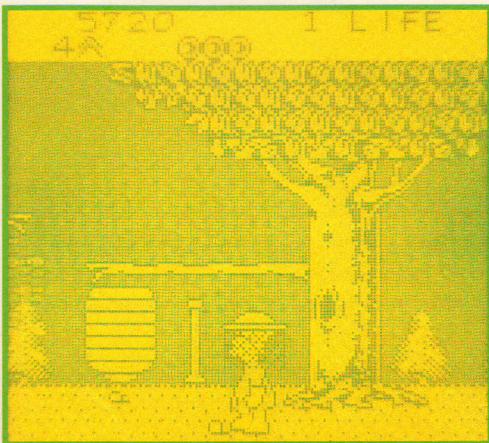


Survive the nuclear dump and Bart's first really tough opponent appears. These ruddy great hornets are well-hard to defeat. You need to jump, throw your boomerangs at an angle – and hope to hell they don't miss!

SIMPSONS

Camp Deadly

but slap on some some brilliant digitised speech ('Eat my shorts' and 'Aye caramba') plus some smart visuals and we have yet another stonky Simpsons simulator – it's certainly my choice for best Game Boy game of the month. Shame it's appeared just as Bart and co. are on the way out. **STEVE**



Every time Bart enters a treehouse and defeats its owner, Lisa gives him a present. F'rinstance, duff up Blindside Bill and Lisa's bee-keeping hat means that Bart can collect this flag no sweat (and no stings).

TOTAL!

Looks



Very smart woodland backdrops and the animation is generally tidy. Not too blurry

Sounds



The Simpsons tune warbles on a bit, but the sampled speech is pretty impressive!

Gameplay



Simple jump 'n collect stuff, with good controls and lots of nice touches

Life span

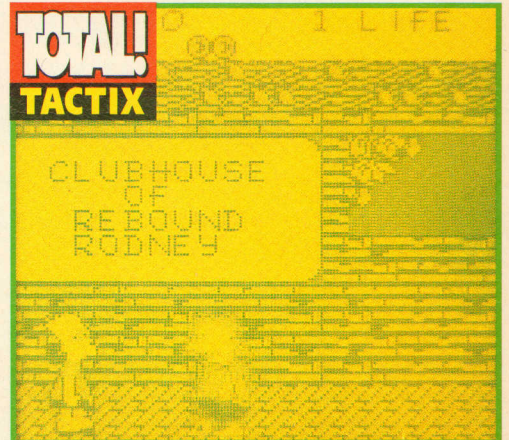


Well-graded difficulty means that you keep on coming back for one more go!

Final rating
92
Percent



Lucky old Bart seems to star in all the decent carts! Gameplay might be dead simple, but it looks good, sounds good and plays like a dream. Stick at it for a couple of minutes and I guarantee you'll be hooked!





Here's how to defeat the first treehouse bosses. Blindside Bill: throw a boomerang away from Bill, then jump over him so he turns round and gets hit in the back. Rebound Rodney: throw a boomerang away from Rodney, then jump over it as it returns, so that it hits him on the rebound!

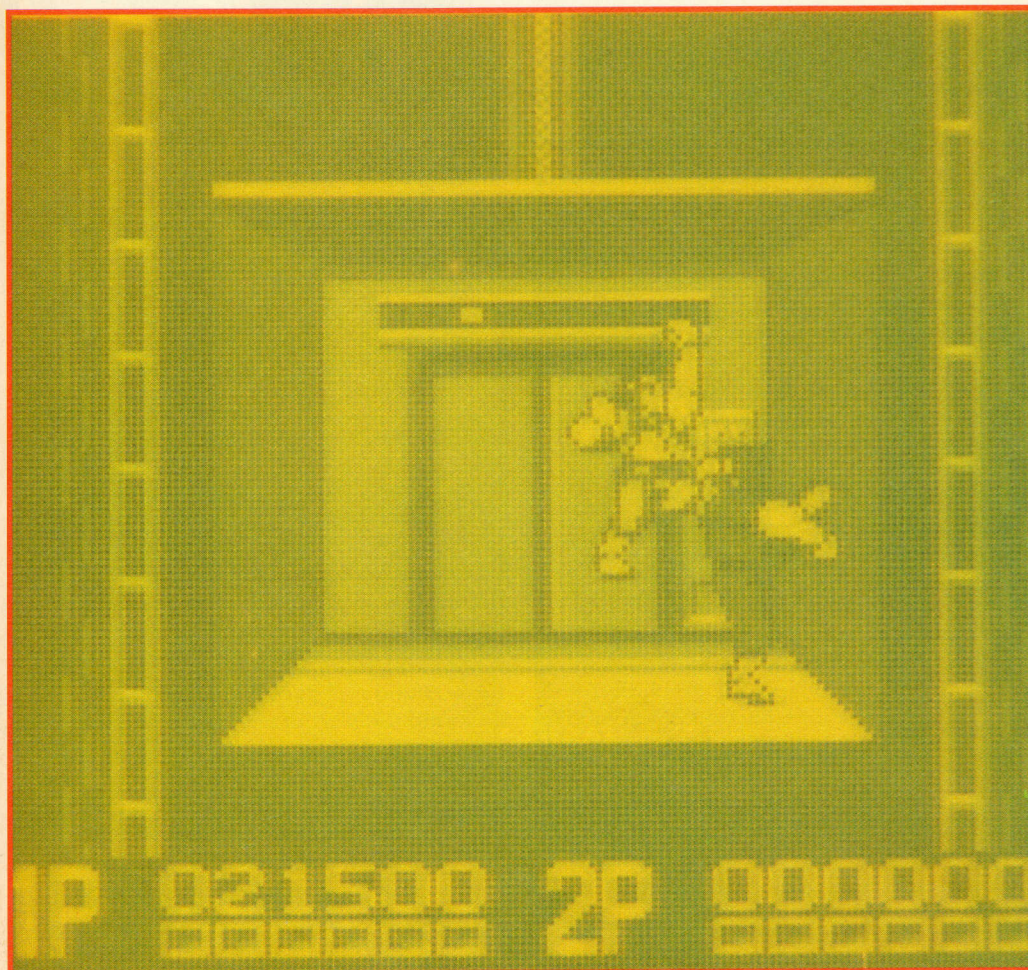
DOUBLE DRAGON 2

For Gameboy (1 or 2 players) From Acclaim Price £25

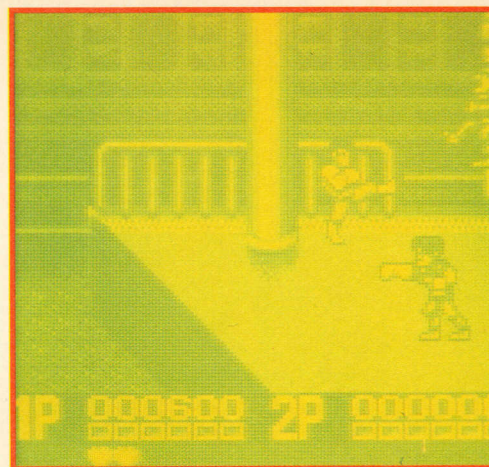
Framed for a crime he did not commit, Billy Lee is back on the streets. He's mean, he's tough – and he's got a brother who looks after him. They stick to each other like bubble gum to Baldy's wig, and they're fighting for their lives.

 **HEADS** 
Continuous two-player action, slick graphics and loads of really bad baddies to beat up. What fun!

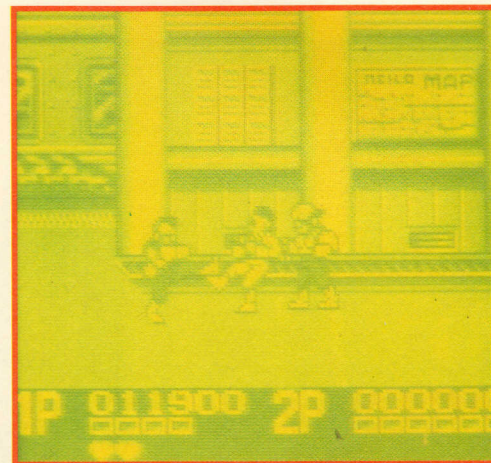
Now a ruthless gang wants a 'serious chat' with the bros, so Billy and Jimmy wisely decide to beat up everyone they meet in a bid to escape.
They don't call games of this particular 'genre' (as us arty types say) beat 'em ups just for the fun



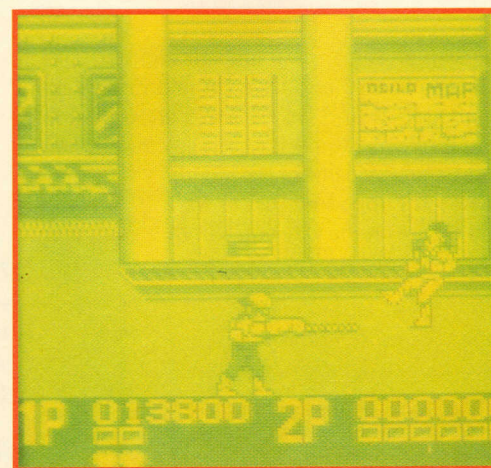
First floor ladies underwear, second floor household goods, third floor, thugs maniacs and psycopaths. Er, first floor then please. Too late, the loony lift attendant's dander is up.



The tube station isn't exactly one of the nicer places in this town. Wave after wave of callous commuters give you a beating.



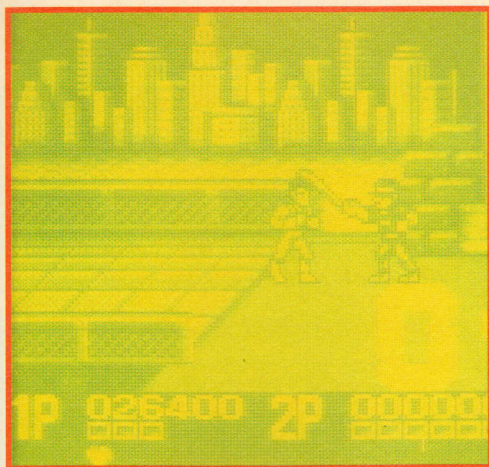
The blokey on the left has a powerful punch while the right hand dude swings a chain. I, on the other hand, can do neither.



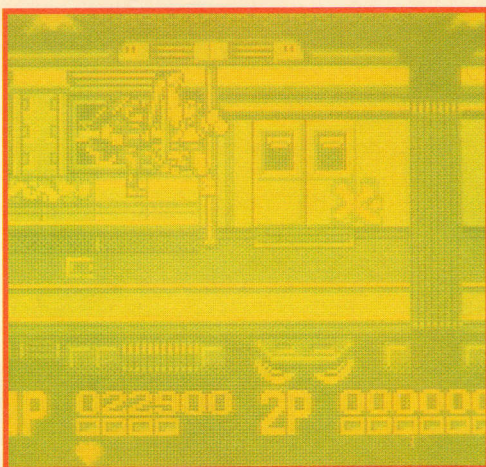
All right so the 'head like a polished grapefruit' joke was a bit off. Is that any reason to chain me to death? Er, apparently yes.

of it, you know. Take Double Dragon 2 – after selecting your player mode and difficulty level, the violence starts.

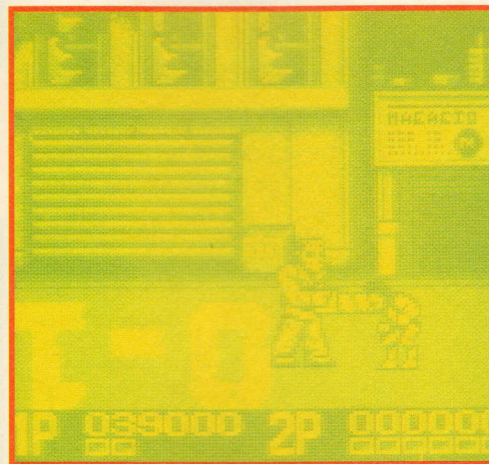
And then the violence goes on. And on. And on. There are more wibbly noses, twisted arms, dented heads and missing limbs after these two have finished than at an Action Man reject shop. This is the one and only theme to the action – a



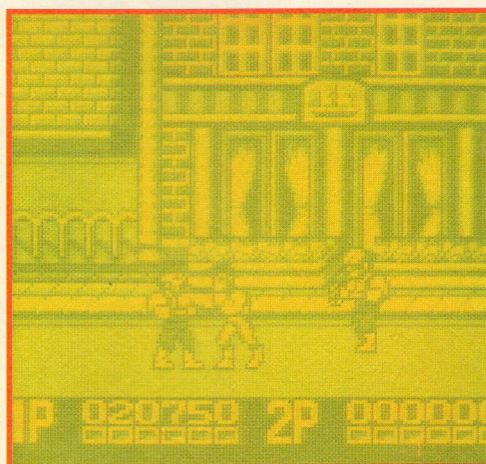
Woe is me, for yon guttersnipe hath taken it upon himself to chastise me with his rod fashioned of sturdiest oak... Oh plop!



Oh no! It's the demon morris dancer from hell. If the stick doesn't kill you off, the jingling of his sickeningly twee bells might.



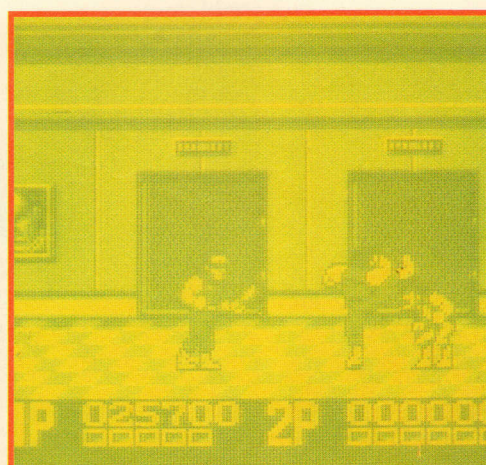
Hello children, this is Slasher The Clown and he's here to show you a trick with his special spinny chainsaw. BLEARGH! Ta daa.



The posh end of town where murderers are of a higher calibre. The Knives and chains are from Benetton's winter collection.



Who put that WWF shot in there? No sorry, my mistake. It's actually just some fat git who's decided I'd make a comfy chair.



I've bean beaten, chained and cut up by thugs... I only came out for a loaf of bread.

continuous procession of violence as Billy (and sometimes Jimmy) scrap their way through ten levels of baddies.

Sometimes the action's on the surface, sometimes underground and sometimes in subway cars – but the beat 'em up



BUTTS
It could easily get boring if you're not one of the large number of people who loved the original

gameplay remains the same throughout. The action pace is fairly slow, but this is due to the high level of detail put into the characters' animation. All sorts of bad guys flamboyantly waddle on to the screen and then are pummelled,

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Slow but smoothly-animated characters. Nasty bosses and butch heroes, we love it!

Sounds



■ Fairly average stuff – some typical Game Boy effects which you can always turn off

Gameplay



■ Solid, monotonous, unvaried, perpetual, jaw-breaking, shin-kickin' beat 'em up

Life span



■ Two-player option adds an extra dimension, but the ten levels are pretty samey

Double Dragon 2 is a non-stop orgy of violence and street-fighting. If this is the sort of game you go for, then don't miss it for anything!



Final rating
77
Percent

kicked, elbowed and punched back off with equal style.

My gripe is that violence can get boring, (unless you're beating up Baldy) and I'd be happier if there was a little more variation. Each level finishes with a boss, but apart from that there's very little ingenuity in the game design.

And, despite what the screen shots may look like, there's very limited control over the fighting action. With just two buttons, you can only punch or kick – the rest of the moves happen automatically when you get close to your target baddie, or if he's about to keel over.

But apart from these two gripes, this is a slick, impressive game. All the fans of the original Double Dragon will love this sequel, and any of you beat 'em up freaks out there will appreciate the constant rounds of violence.

Great sound effects, a big challenge, smooth graphics and solid action make Double Dragon 2 one of those games that does what it does very well. It just all boils down to whether or not you like what it does, really.**ANDY**



TOTAL!

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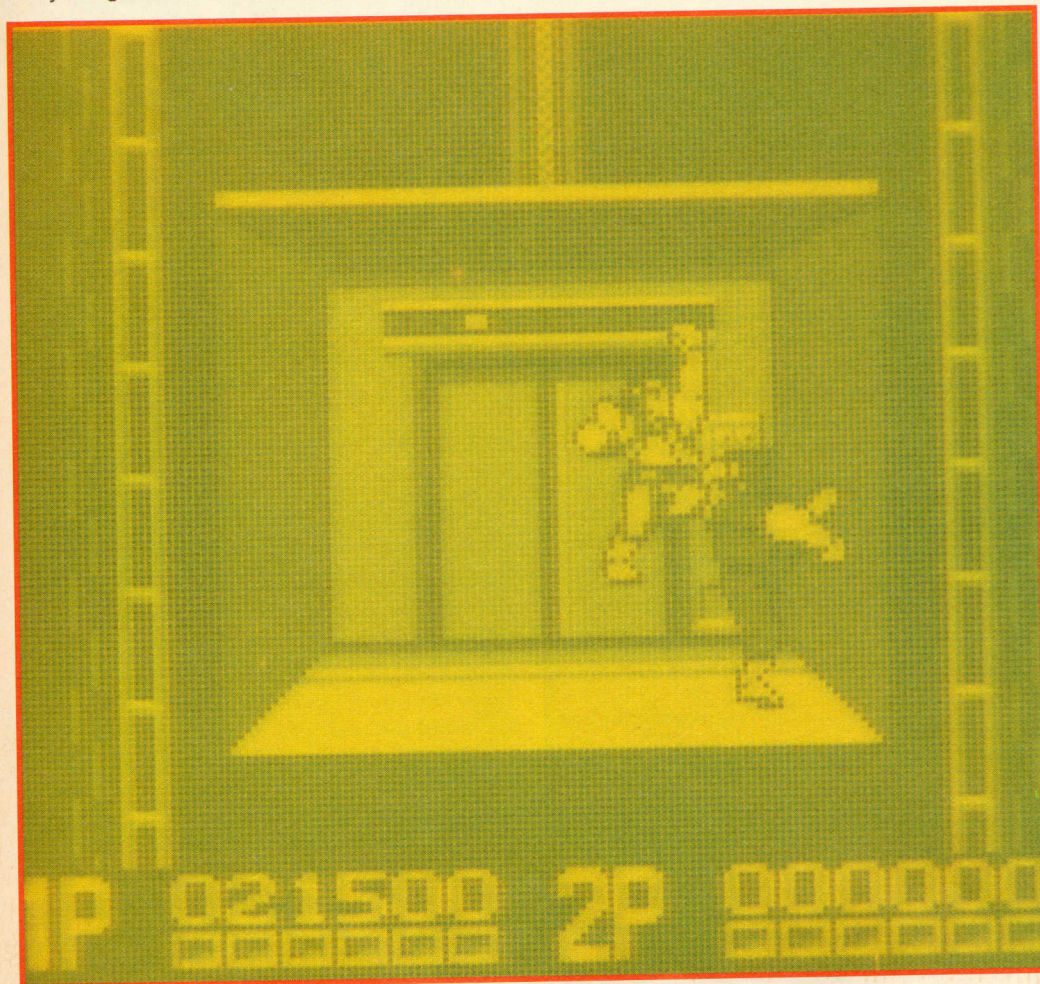
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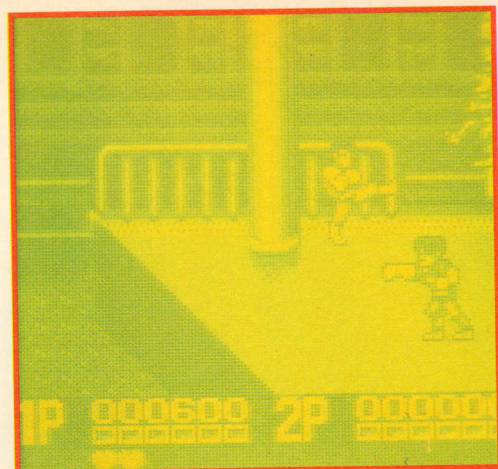
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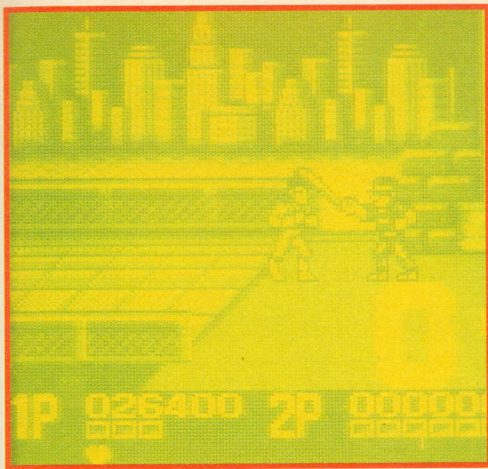
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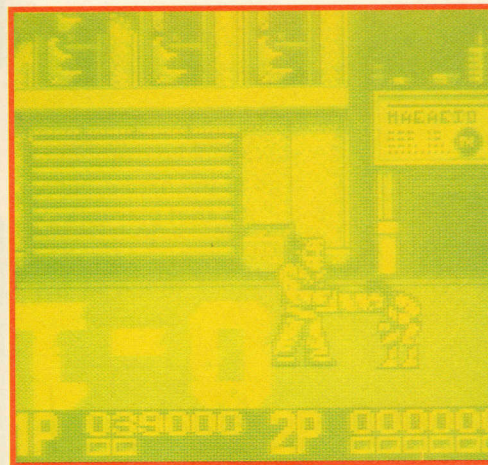
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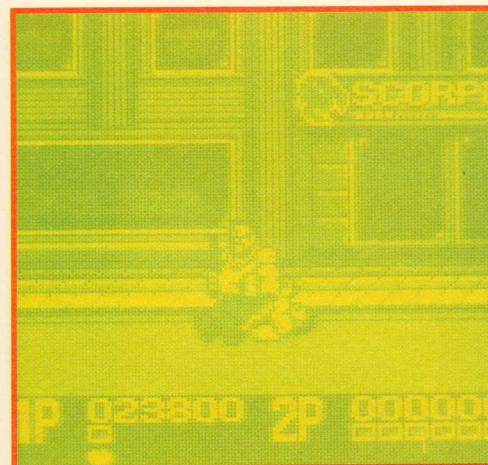
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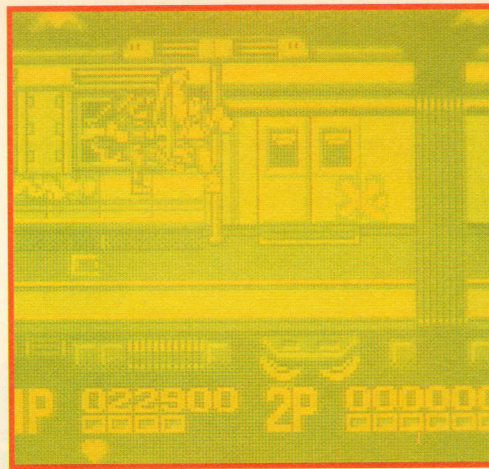
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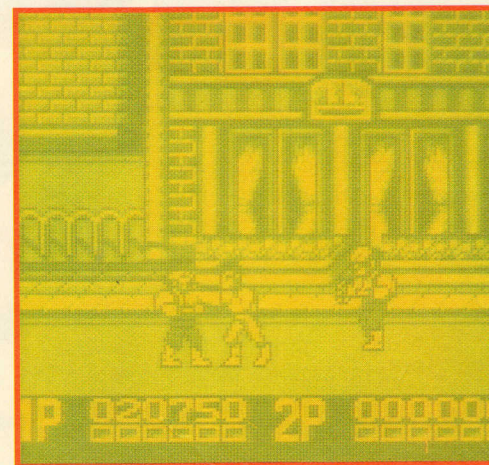
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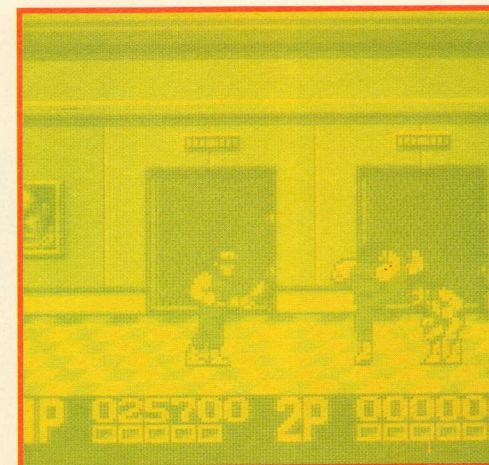
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Percent

kicked, elbowed and punched back off with equal style.

My gripe is that violence can get boring, (unless you're beating up Baldy) and I'd be happier if there was a little more variation. Each level finishes with a boss, but apart from that there's very little ingenuity in the game design.

And, despite what the screen shots may look like, there's very limited control over the fighting action. With just two buttons, you can only punch or kick – the rest of the moves happen automatically when you get close to your target baddie, or if he's about to keel over.

But apart from these two gripes, this is a slick, impressive game. All the fans of the original Double Dragon will love this sequel, and any of you beat 'em up freaks out there will appreciate the constant rounds of violence.

Great sound effects, a big challenge, smooth graphics and solid action make Double Dragon 2 one of those games that does what it does very well. It just all boils down to whether or not you like what it does, really.**ANDY**



BURAI FIGHTER

Who says the Game Boy's no good for shoot 'em ups? Well Burai Fighter will certainly put that argument to rest once and for all.

It's tough, it's multi-directional, and it's pretty near unputdownable. The evil Burai want to control the whole universe (and who can blame them) and it's your job to stop them. But they have five well-defended bases that spew out hideous robot-mutant things at an incredible rate.

No need to quake in your boots too much though because you have a mighty arsenal at your disposal, so all you have to do is survive long enough to find the power-ups and collect them.

The sound is bit repetitive and can get slightly

annoying, but that's what the volume control is for.

The graphics however are excellent. The patterned backgrounds let you know what direction you're travelling in, whether there is any scenery on screen or not.

The scenery itself varies nicely from level to level, and not all of it is completely user friendly.

Make sure you don't get stuck behind any of it in your search for secret rooms, because if you aren't free to move in the direction of forward travel by the time the edge of the screen reaches you, you explode!

The verdict on Burai Fighter? It's fast, it's

furious and it's fun, and possibly a lot of other words beginning with F, but one thing's for sure, everyone should have it – unless of course you're one of those boring dweebs who really hates a good old blasting session. **ANDY**

FIGHTERS

Excellent variety of challenges. The power-ups are pretty fab and the scenery scrolls so smoothly

MUTANTS

The aliens are a bit on the weeny side – there's nothing too scary about these guys!

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Nice main character sprites and scenery over smoothly scrolling backgrounds

Sounds



■ Tedious, repetitive and after a while pretty annoying – use the volume control!

Gameplay



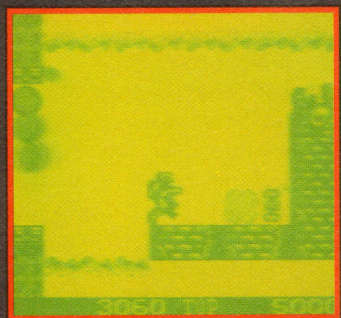
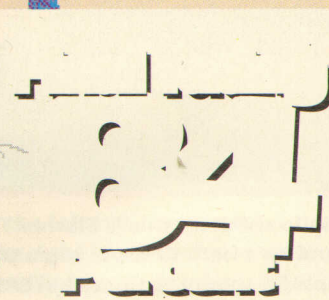
■ The shoot 'em up is a classic genre, and this is an excellent Game Boy example

Life span



■ Five heavily defended bases and three difficulty levels should keep you going

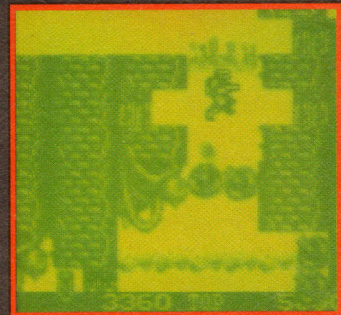
Pretty hot stuff! Even when you've seen everything in the easy level, you'll still be gagging for a go at the harder ones... it's that playable



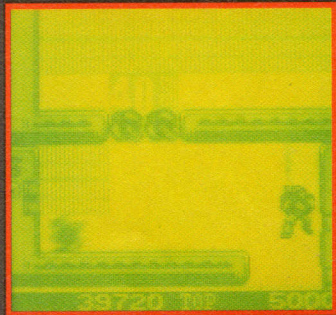
Some aliens drop these power up pods when you kill 'em.



Double trouble. This guardian is helped out by falling rocks.



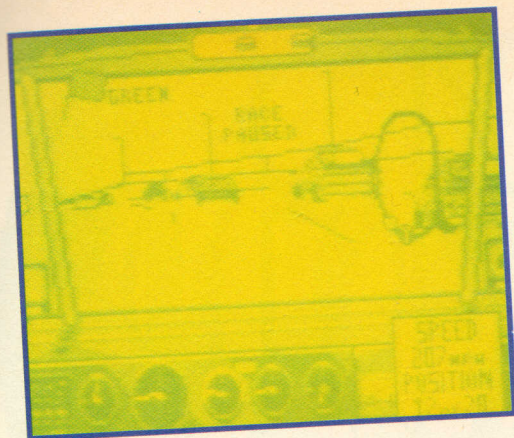
The screen scrolls up so destroy those gun turrets to proceed.



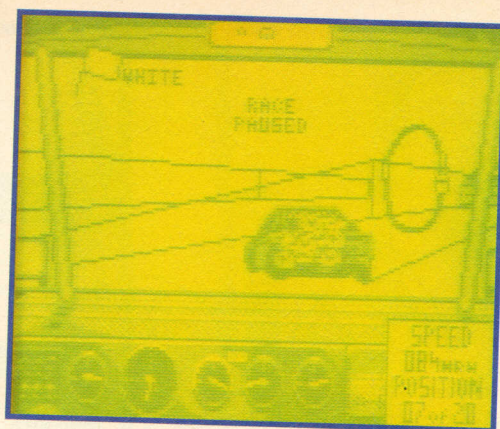
Same again, but there's also a little alien to destroy too.



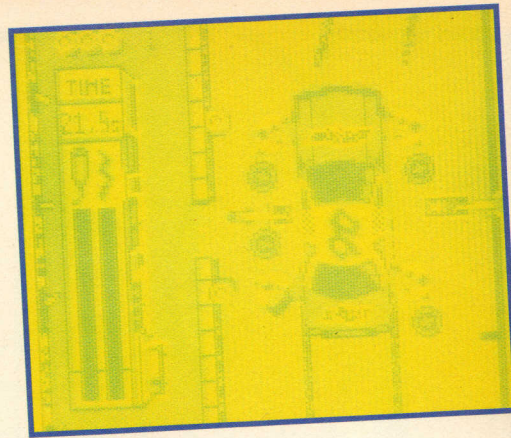
One of the more fearsome-looking guardians. He moves from left to right occasionally lobbing a bomb. Shoot him in the mouth then dodge down to avoid getting chomped. Repeat the move until he's dead. Simple!



After getting a really bad grid position in the qualifiers, I'm now in 12th place.



Things are getting a bit rough, but my route to the pits is blocked by this burning wreck.



Still, on the very next lap I enter the pits, do a few repairs and go on to win... honest!

DAYS OF THUNDER

For **Game Boy**
(1 player)

From **Mindscape**

Price **£25**

If I can just push a bit harder, that little jerk will be out of my hair for good



Feel the need, the need for, er... oh dear. That was the other Tom Cruise film. Never mind, you may not be piloting an F-14 Tomcat jet aircraft, but a top-of-the-range stock car is pretty nippy – and that's what you're driving.

You are Cole Trickle (!?) and you made this rather silly bet. You reckoned that stock car racing was dead easy because all you have to do is whiz round a track, so it wouldn't take too many brains to become world champion.

Er, well, no. It's not that easy at all. In fact it's pretty damn difficult.

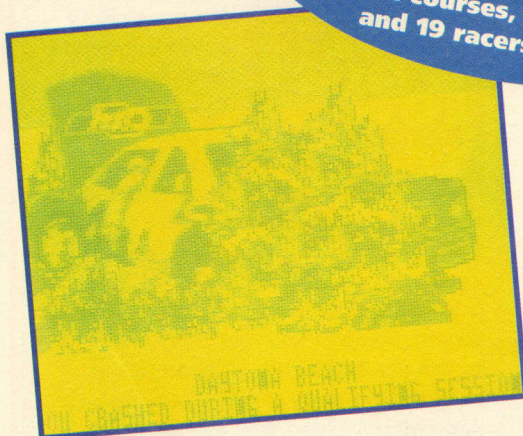
Honk! Honk! If you fancy a game that requires brain cells as well as driving skills, this is your kinda cart

Firstly, there's this slight problem of the 19 other drivers, all of 'em world champion hopefuls. And they'll all be out there doing their dastardly best to make your souped-up, fuel-injected, race-prepared rocket on wheels look like a Reliant Robin. Secondly, the race courses may well look like big circles, but that doesn't mean you can just chug around admiring the scenery – at 200mph the corners are tighter than Baldy's wallet – and of course you've got to make sure you don't crash into the sides.

Crashing into your opponents isn't really advisable either. It slows you down and damages your car. 'So what?' I hear you say. After all, British stock cars are just bashed-up

GREEN LIGHTS
Fast movin' realistic racing action. There's pit-stops, refuelling, five different courses, qualifying laps and 19 racers to beat

PIT-STOP
No password option, even though some of the races are 40 laps long. The graphics aren't really up to scratch



Having set the standard it's time to let Stevie have a go. Ha, haaa! Pitiful isn't it?

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Impressive 3D graphics, but still not good enough to do the job properly

Sounds



■ Great engine roars and crashing sounds, but I wouldn't dance to it at a party

Gameplay



■ Racing simulator takes time, skill and patience – there's a lot to be discovered

Life span



■ If you like getting into a game, try this – there's a big brain teasin' task ahead

Final rating
73
Percent



heaps of decrepit old rubbish that were too scruffy for the local tip.

But in the US, the cars are finely-tuned pieces of machinery, and if you crash too often you blow it. There's none of this 'only three wheels on my waggon but I'm still rolling along' nonsense. You have to make a lot of pit stops to keep the damn thing working.

So is it any good? Well, there's a lot to learn, that's for sure. Days Of Thunder is a deep game and there's a big challenge to be explored as your bid for the championship progresses. A password system would have been nice, but there isn't one.

The graphics really let the game down too. Not that they're technically unimpressive – there's some of the best Game Boy visuals I've ever seen here. But for such a little screen, and with all those cars on the track, it gets too confusing. All in all, this is one for racing addicts only.

ANDY

TOTAL!

FORGED

For Game Boy (1-2 players)

From Jaleco

Price £22

As soon as you turn this game on and the military-style soundtrack kicks in, you just know you're in for some tough, mercenary, ass-kickin' action. You play two (yeah, two) battle-hardened guerrillas

ZONES
Unusual gamestyle – perfect for the portable. Clever two-player link-up gameplay

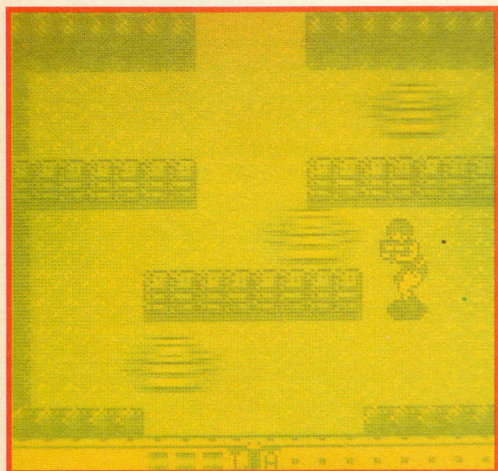
dropped into enemy terror-tory. Like a cross between Gauntlet and Smash TV, you explore four stages of enemy-filled terrain with the aim of penetrating the impenetrable fortress at the end.

It's an odd mission because you alternate between two characters – the girlie can jump over

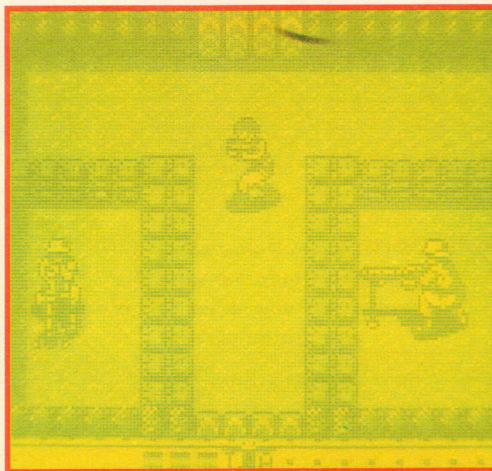
spikey hazards, but must leave any heavy artillery for the blokey. It's up to you to choose when to use one over the other. (In the two-player link-up, both characters can appear on screen together.)

Each stage is a simple maze, where you move from room to room, blasting the enemy and collecting extra firepower and keys, ready to face an end-of-stage guardian.

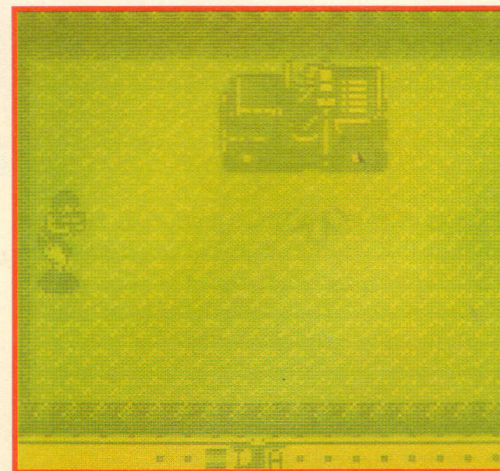
Thankfully, a neat automapping function takes the drudge work out of exploring: the last thing you want to worry about is making little marks



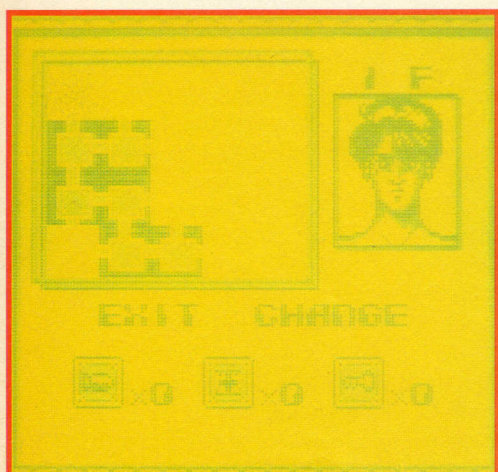
There's no shooting these dreaded scurrying Tefal toasters. Just try and avoid 'em before they roast your buns and cook your goose.



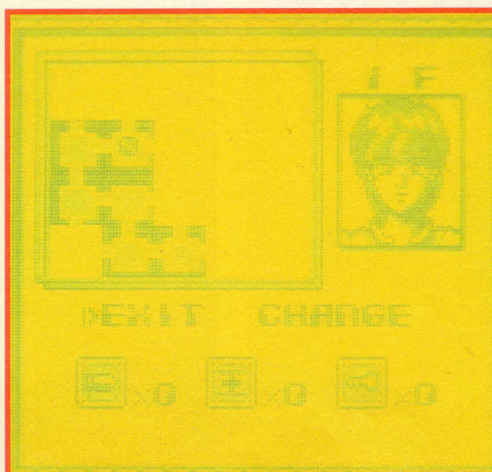
Bad news: two maniacs shouldering massive sub machine guns. Good news: they're both completely blind and deaf.



This cheatin' jeep carries a machine gun which has just one barrel but can fire in three directions all at the same time! Swiz.



Masato Kanzaki – the brawns of the duo. He can pick up extra firepower and handle the heavy artillery. But he can't jump for toffee.



Mizuki Makimura – beauty and brains. She uses stealth instead of brute force, jumping over hazards which would kill her comrade.

TOTAL!
TACTIX

It's possible to bring a character back from the dead. When one of your guerrillas has met an untimely end, try

to direct the remaining soldier to a Medicine icon. Stand close next to it (without actually picking it up) and press SELECT to enter the map/status screen. Swap characters and then return to the playing screen. Although the shimmering body of the dead character appears only for a few moments, it's enough to register a pick-up. The character now has full life points and stomps about as good as new. Sneaky, huh?

ZONE

on your charts while under attack from a high-powered auto-cannon with a heavy attitude.

This all sounds pretty hip, and true enough, at first it's a jolly good romp. But there are three major faults with Fortified Zone. 1) If you die by getting squished beneath heavy hardware, your other character reappears in the same place and suffers the same fate. Dumb.

MOANS
Only the fourth stage lays down a challenge. Random death can be a bit of a downer

2) The first three missions aren't too difficult – a couple of days should see them off – which leaves you struggling over one mean mutha' of a fourth level. Silly.

3) It's random: sometimes you enter a room and kill everyone no hassle. Next time, you'll walk straight into a hail of fire and die horribly. Annoying.

Which is all a bit sad, really. Let's hope they do a Fortified Zone 2 and get it right next time.

A great idea which is playable right from the start. However it doesn't take long before the faults start to show and it becomes frustrating

STEVE

TOTAL!

TOTAL!

Looks



Fairly complex stuff here with lots of movement in both characters and enemies

Sounds



Plenty of military snare drums 'n' stuff, but the effects could be punchier

Gameplay



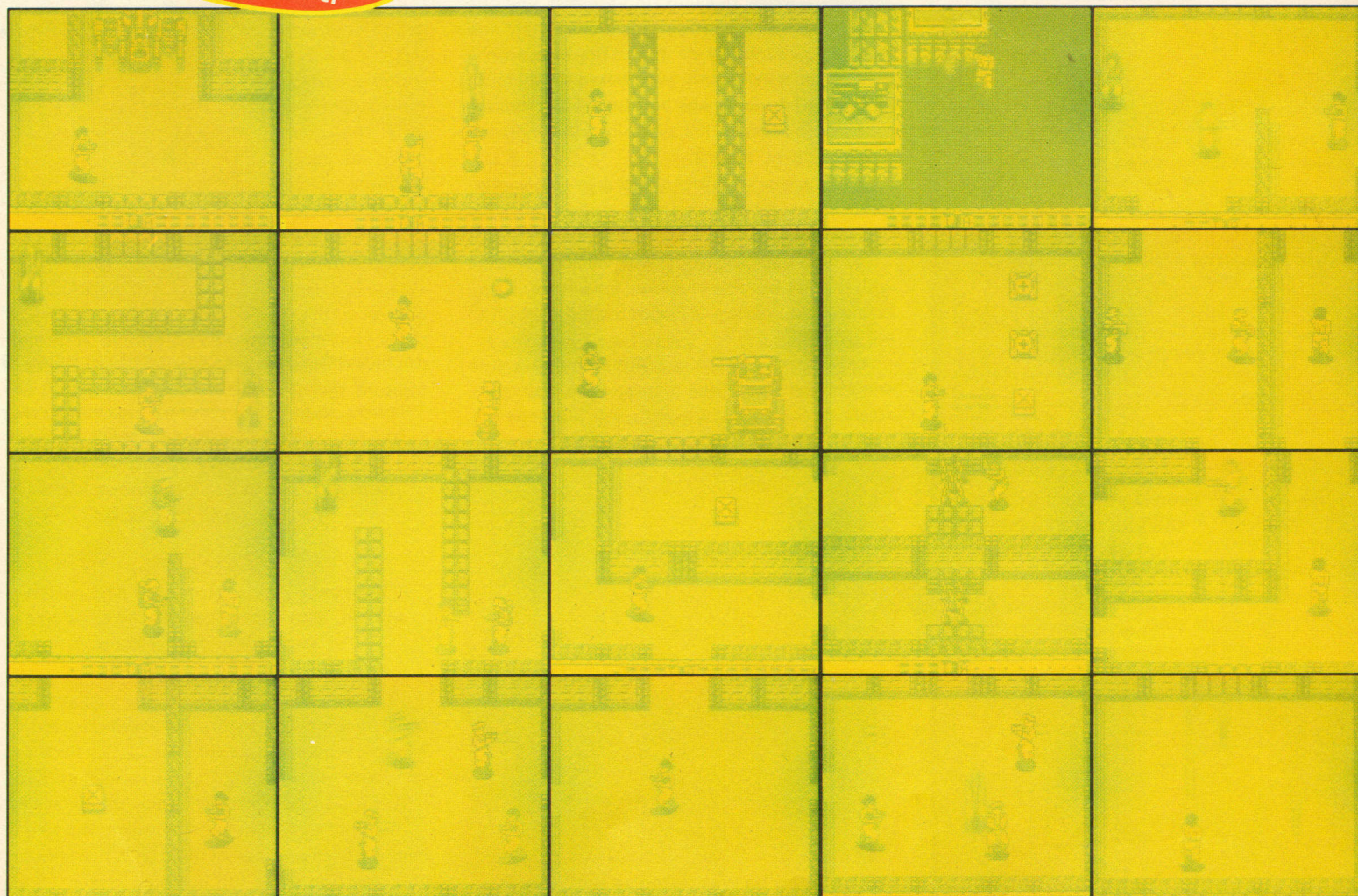
Innovative blend of action and strategy, but has a few too many annoying faults

Life span

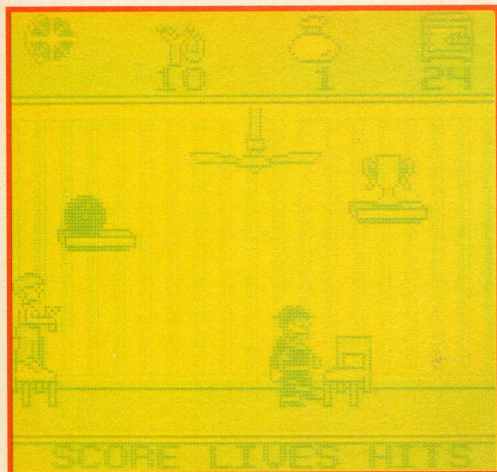


You'll see off three stages in a few days, and the fourth won't last forever

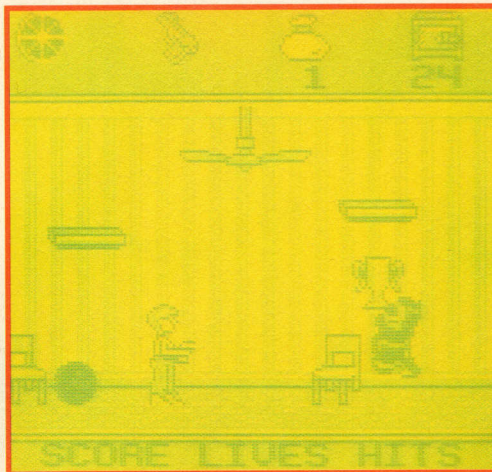
Final rating
68
Percent



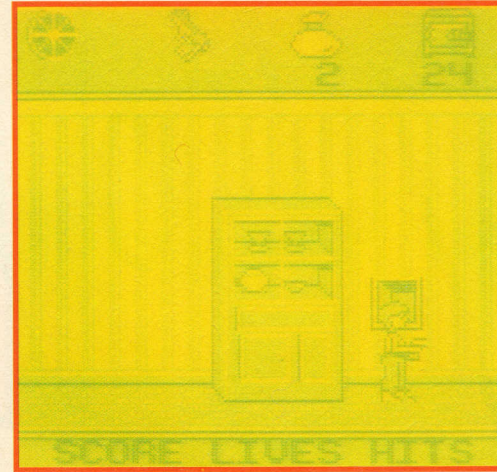
Impressive, huh? Yep indeedy, this here set of screenshots is the whole of stage one, showing every single room in the maze. This will help you finish this stage, but for the full low-down, why not catch our complete player's guide in next month's TOTAL Tactix section?



After coming across one of the villains trying to steal a trophy, our quick-thinking hero looks around the room for a solution.



Quick as a flash he dislodges the bowling ball. As it hits the floor with a thud, it knocks the trophy onto the villain, hurrah!



Having saved the family silver from the crims, the little star hides the goodies in a safe place, otherwise known as the cellar.

HOME ALONE

TOTAL!

Looks



There's nothing special about it at all. Both the scenery and sprites are bland

Sounds



Whoever wrote the sound-track was definitely not on this planet at the time

Gameplay



Incredibly dull. Lots of wandering around and very little action. Snore

Life span



This has the longevity of five doughnuts in the TOTAL office at tea-time. Not much!

Even if you couldn't stand the kid, the movie was full of devious trap-designing and mischievous action. And, er, this isn't!

Final rating
38
Percent

Think of the film Home Alone and the word 'typical' springs immediately and sickeningly to mind. It's based on a 'typical' American family (with pots of dosh, naturally). They have a 'typical' brattish kid. The 'typical' robbers look scruffy. It's 'typically' puke-inducing schmaltz, if you ask me.

There's even a white Christmas and a tear-jerking (I don't think) happy ending with the 'typical' family being reunited. For heaven's sake!

So how does the Game Boy version compare with this sick but action-packed adventure? Gawd love us, I don't know if I'm motivated enough to tell you really.

Let's start with the graphics. Mmmm... cute enough in places – little piccies of the main characters *do* add to the atmosphere – but generally

the in-game graphics look flat. All the rooms are very similar, and it's only the odd piece of new furniture which allows you to differentiate between them.

As for the gameplay, the whole thing is pretty er... typical really. How many times do we have to sit through this 'avoid the traps and pick up the odd piece of treasure' sort of dross?

COPS

A few scrummy scene-setting pictures. There's a big game here (if you're at all bothered)

ROBBERS

Crummy gameplay and not much action. The guardian sequences are a real pain in the bum

And as if the boring gameplay isn't enough, it's all made horribly worse by basement sections where the guardians reside. The display here is so tacky and movement patterns so appalling that it makes this section virtually impossible to tackle.

My final words? If you either liked the film or have an attention span of more than five minutes, you may find some fun in Home Alone for a while. Otherwise stick to the movie.

STEVE

TOTAL!



Oh dear, and he was doing so well too. If you lose concentration for even a moment the beastly bad guys hang you up to dry.

Speak my mind, me, so I'll come straight to the point. Not only is this game far too easy, it's also far too short. Since the arcade original and the NES version only had six levels, it's pretty pathetic that this version has lost the last (and most interesting) level.

So did they spice up the gameplay to make it more challenging? Nope. It has changed *slightly*, like the easier vortex bit on level two and the significantly harder aerial section on level five. But for every bit that has become more challenging, there's another bit of the game that's become a real doddle.

And to add insult to injury they've axed a helluva lot all together. Gone are the deadly birds from the silly maze, gone are the pounding mallets on level four and gone are the mini monsters that you can kill for extra time on the silly maze. What's replaced them? An easily avoidable worm thingy which does nothing more than flip backwards and forwards.

Something else that really annoyed me is the victory screen at

the end of the final level. Or lack of it. Instead of saying what a brilliant success you are, or something, the game simply loops straight back to level two, so you can start all over again and bump up your score.

Time bonuses have also been left out, but this is just as well as the time limits are far from harsh. If anything, when the game loops back to level two it gets easier to complete second time around.

MARBLE MADNESS

The laws of physics don't seem to apply in this game. Enter that funnel and your ball gets squeezed through the tiny pipe to the next level down. How odd.

the original. But I ask myself, who wants to spend money on a mere five hours' worth of play? Maybe complete Marble Madness freaks, but not me. This just isn't my scene, I'm afraid. **ANDY**

TOTAL!

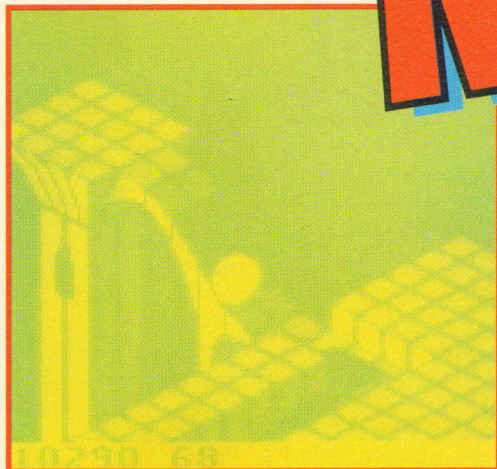
I do concede that, for a Game Boy game, the graphics are pretty swish and apart from the bits that are left out the gameplay is much the same as

BALL MOVEMENTS

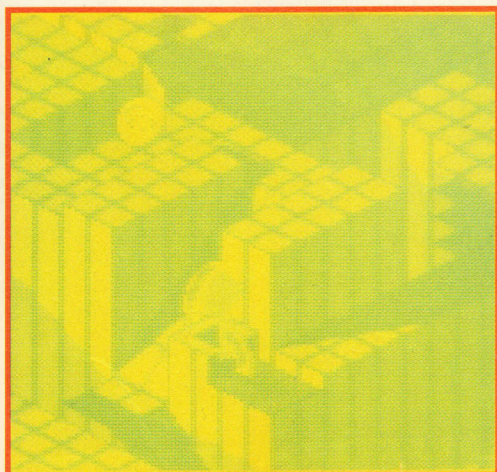
Graphics are almost as impressive as the arcade original as is the gameplay, apart from the bits which have been axed

BOWEL MOVEMENTS

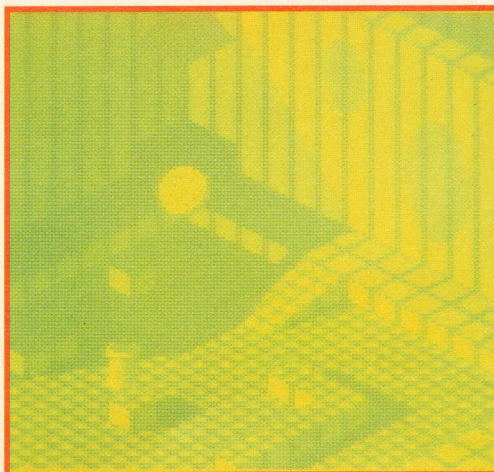
Last level and some of the hazards have been dropped – there's just not enough there. You'll finish this in under a day



It's all downhill from here. It might look like a nice straight route down, but if you're not careful with the joypad, you're doomed. Don't take anything for granted.



A helping hand is nice, but a helping scoop is better. This spoony-type thing catapults you to the next section of the maze. Yip!



The silly maze. It's different from the other levels. Instead of rolling downhill courtesy of gravity, you have to climb to victory.

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Pretty good – they've managed to do justice to the original arcade visuals

Sounds



■ Again, fairly close to the original. Good FX with a different tune on every level

Gameplay



■ It plays OK but there's just not enough variety. A cut-down version of the original

Life span



■ If you've played this before, it'll take you an hour. If not, it'll take you a day!



What a shame they've cut it down from such a brilliant original. The graphics are really the only thing that save this from the bin

Final rating
31
Percent

GHOSTBUSTERS

For Game Boy (1 player)

From Activision/HAL Laboratory

Price £25

The ghosts of New York are revolting! No, that doesn't mean they're all scabby and smelly (although, thinking about it, most of them are), it means that they're trying to take over the city. They've stolen Dana Barrett's baby, and they're out to cause as much havoc as possible.

And as everyone knows, if you're seeing things and it don't look good, who ya gonna call? Ghostbusters of course. Select which two (yes, two)

of the Ghostbusting team you want to play with, and let's get moving.

Now you've got to explore a whole city of buildings, busting all the ghosts as you go. You control one character, who is then closely followed by the other. The lead character zaps the ghosts

BUSTERS
Groovy looks and nifty gameplay. Just like the film, this has excellent visual effects and a sound track to turn you to jelly

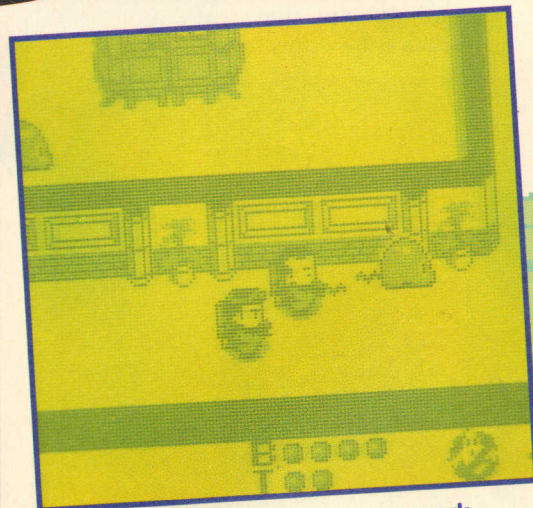
(button B) and your partner then collects the stunned ghoulies with his spook trap (button A).

This would all be dead easy, if it wasn't for the fact that your partner often gets lost. I mean, it's not that much to ask of a buddy, is it?

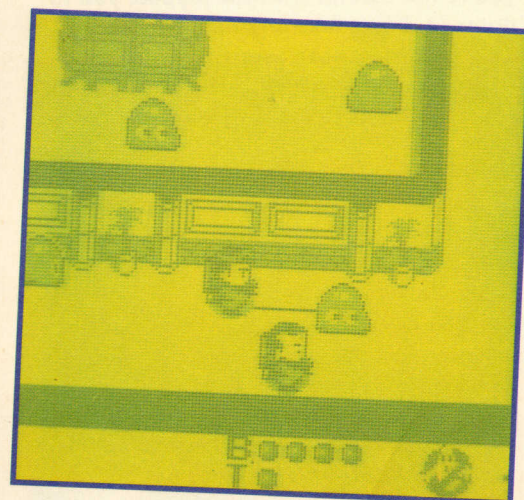
Who ya gonna call? Er, these jerks!



Gosh, don't they look impressive. There's Winston Zeddemore on the left, Dr Egon Spengler (the geek with the glasses), Dana Barrett (phwoar!), Dr Peter Venkman (next to Dana Barrett, phwoar!) and Dr Raymond Stantz on the right. They're here to stop a river of slime (generated by people's negative energies) engulfing New York. There's a little lesson for us all here. Don't get slimed - think positive! (Er, Steve?)



The Ghostbusters believe in teamwork which is why you have to control two characters at once. One to freeze the spooks...



... And one to suck up the fiends with his spirit-o-vac (or whatever it's called). Clear all the ghosts and it's onto the next level.

TERS 2

Just sticking behind, while you do all the really dangerous work of zapping the ghosts. But for reasons best known to himself, every now and again he gets left behind. Then you've got to re-trace your steps so he can find you.

You always know how many ghosts are left at the end of each level by looking at the gauge in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen. Trap all the ghosts, and you can progress to the next harder, larger, more ghost-infested level.

There's a time limit too. You don't have to complete each level before the clock ticks down to zero, but if you don't then all the ghosties get 'arder. So it's a good idea to race around the buildings as fast as is Ghostbustingly possible.

Along the way, you'll meet the rest of the Ghostbusting team leaning casually against the walls.

You can bring them into the game (substituting one of your existing characters) simply by walking up to them. The characters will swap positions, action will continue as before, except that (with a bit of luck) the new character will have a new weapon with him.

Speaking of weapons, there are hoovers (they simply suck up the ghosts), and freezers (all the ghosts are temporarily frozen, so all you have to do is whizz round trapping them), plus invincibility shields and power-ups that let you to walk through walls.

Ghostbusters 2 is an excellent little game. It looks good, sounds brilliant (complete with the famous Ghostbusters signature tune) and plays like a dream. Completing all the levels will be a real challenge, but you'll have a lot of fun doing it.

Ghostbusters 2 is a slick, cartoony, ghost-zapping romp from start to finish. More slime than a pond of frog spawn – SSSLURRRP!

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Characters move smoothly, with loads of comic touches – especially the Slimers

Sounds



■ Groovy sound track and in-game effects make this prime headphone-fodder

Gameplay



■ Explore and trap 'em gameplay is neat – you get used to controlling two people

Life span



■ There's a big challenge ahead as the ghosts get smarter and harder to catch



Final rating
85
Percent

There's lots of tricks to be learned on each level, and the end-of-stage

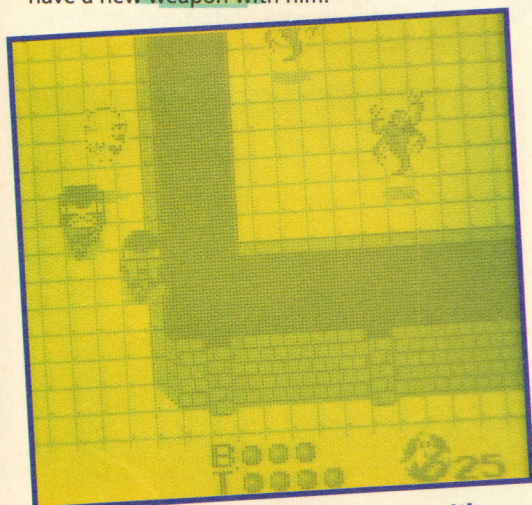
boss bits break up the action. What else is there to say, except bustin' makes you feel good?

STEVE

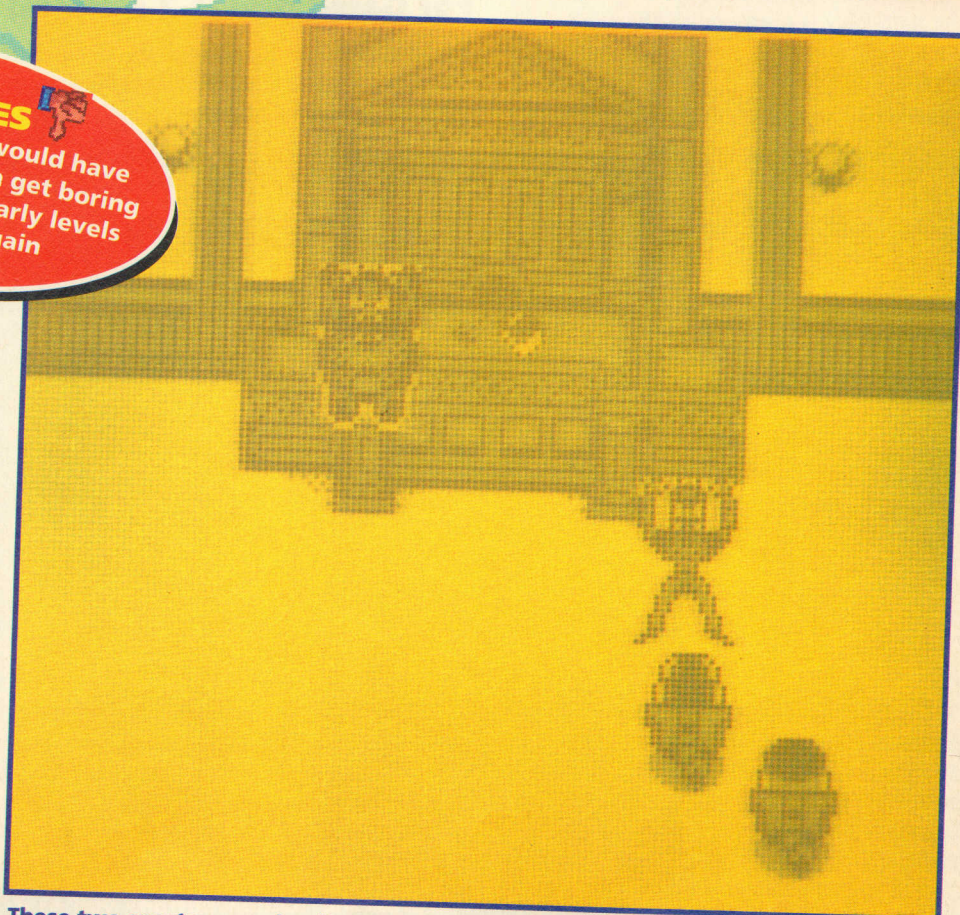
TOTAL!

GHOULIES

A password system would have been a big help – it can get boring playing through the early levels over and over again



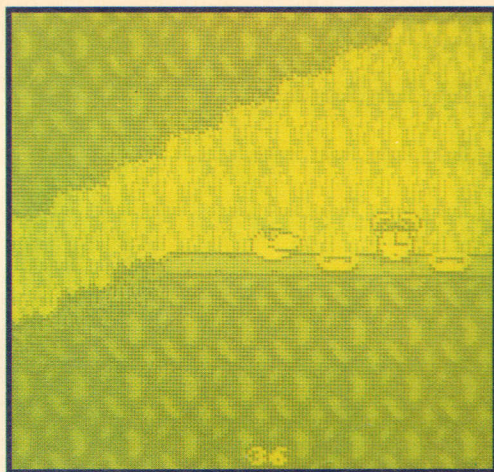
You don't get any pathetic 'people with sheets over their heads' type ghosts in this game. Oh no! These long dead-dudes have extra limbs and stuff like that. But the Ghostbusters have nerves of steel (gulp!).



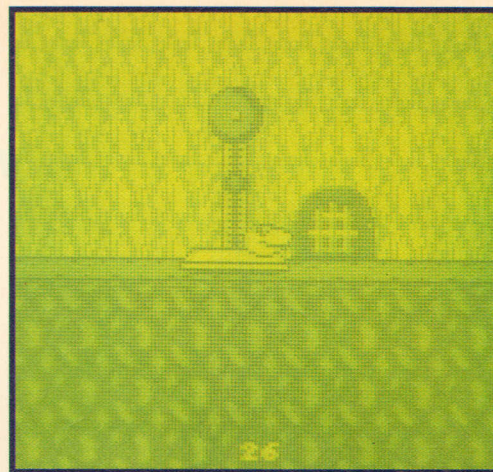
These two spectres are deadly, but one of your 'busters has a protective energy barrier, so you can use him as a shield while the other one blasts the blighters.



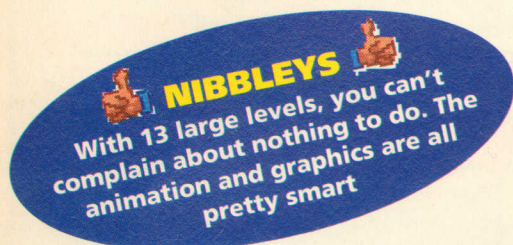
This volcano spits out the Nibbles which you must eat to grow a tail, gain weight and open the exit door. There's quite a vicious time limit so be quick about it.



If it looks like you're going to run out of time, have a quick search round. Who knows? You may find some extra time lurking around under the manholes.



At last! Our snake has reached the exit. Unfortunately, he hasn't grown enough tail sections and if he ain't heavy enough, the bell doesn't ring and the door won't open.



With 13 large levels, you can't complain about nothing to do. The animation and graphics are all pretty smart

NES owners have already had the pleasure of this snakey tale of adventure, excitement and eating things, in the shape of Snake, Rattle N Roll (which got 90% in issue 1). However, the NES game featured astonishingly good 3D-style graphics, while this Game Boy cart merely scrolls along in flat 2D.

The gameplay is pretty much the same: you control one of two snakes, Atilla and Genghis (the other can be guided by a pal via the link cable).

Both snakes have to slither and slide through

SNEAKY

For Game Boy (1-2 players)

From Tradewest

Price £25

the landscape, eating Nibbles (small, round creatures) in order to make their tails grow. Only once your snake has grown heavy enough to activate

the scales does the door to the next level open up and you can carry on.

Obviously, your efforts are hampered by all manner of hazards like enemy creatures, falling rocks, volcanoes, more enemy creatures, and so on. Every time you get hit, you lose a segment of your tail, so then you have to scurry back and gobble up a few more Nibbles before the timer runs out and a small axe hacks you to bits!

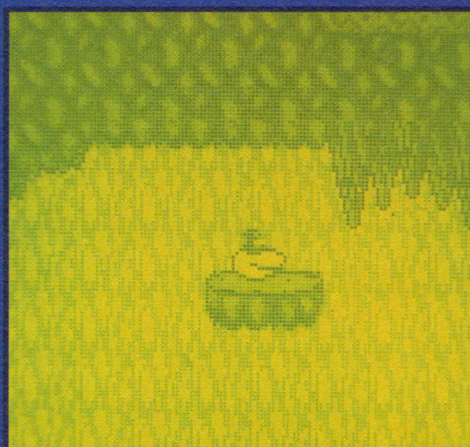
Like the NES version, Sneaky Snakes moves along at a blistering pace. Unfortunately, things get a bit too blurry and confused, making it diffi-

Flip your lid, it's warp factor six

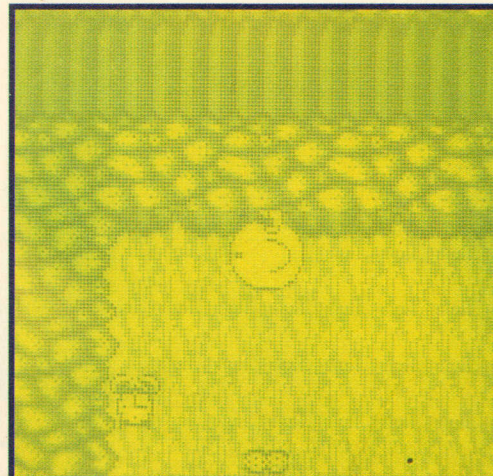
**TOTAL!
TACTIX**



When you get to level three move right. Jump over the lava and move up the next couple of slopes (avoiding the falling stalactites). When you reach the point in the piccy, jump over the lava and open the lid to collect a speed-up key. Jump back across the lava using the platforms, whizz down the big slope and jump up onto the high platform on the left...



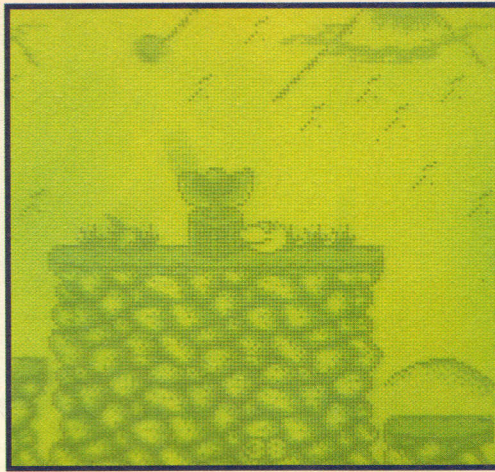
... Open the lid - it leads to a warp zone. When you enter it, move right again up the little incline and jump up onto the first platform you come to. Right, see that platform up and to the right with no lid? (The one in the piccy.) Jump up onto it and press the 'tongue' button - yip! As if by magic you're warped to level six, which is one of those vile swimmy ones.



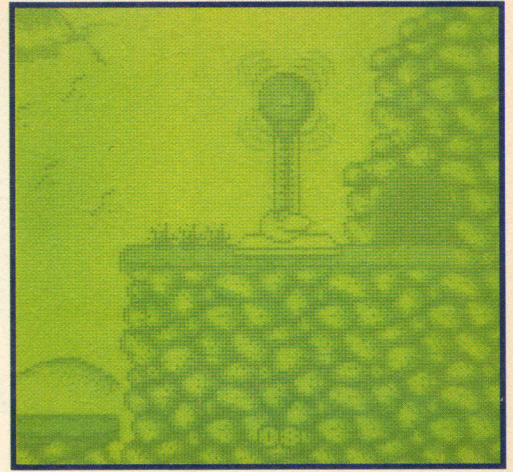
If you can find this secret room and collect the icon that's at the bottom, your snake inflates so you can grab all the goodies!



This enemy is bouncing around so fast we can't even make out what it is. But who cares what it is? The main thing is making sure it doesn't come too close to you.



On this level the Nibbley-Pibbles take the form of fish. You have to be even quicker this time, because the berks head straight for the water as soon as they appear.



I've got it right this time around. Having grown a respectably long tail, I've managed to set off the bell. As you can see, this opens the door to the next level.

SNAKES

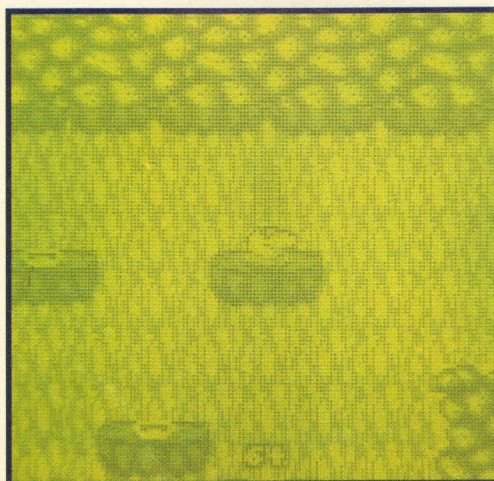
cult to see what's coming up. Also, when you open one of the lids, it's hard to tell what you've collected. It could be a useful icon, an edible Nibbley or an exploding bomb – you often can't tell until it's too late. And with two snakes whizzing about on screen, it's even worse.

Again the playing areas are huge and get even bigger as you work through the levels. However, the game then suffers

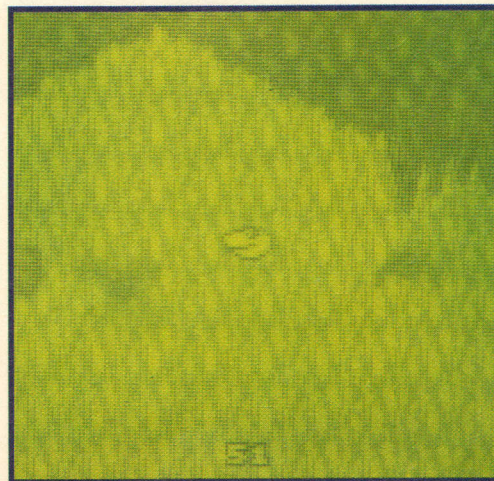
in the same way as Gauntlet II did in that there's only a tiny window on the world, so you can only see a small part of it at a time.

Plus, when the scenery is whizzing about in different directions, it's easy to lose your bearings and end up on some spikes or in the water, or something. Another moan (oh dear, they are mounting up aren't they?) is that it's quite a tough little game and there are some really

NOBBLEYS
A lot of the graphical variety has been lost in the transition from 3D to 2D. The screen can be difficult to see at times



Always open the manholes by using your tongue over them. Sometimes there's a hazard inside but more often it's goodies.



More fast-moving monsters. These blurry little beasts make things even more frustrating than they were before... Grrrrr!

merciless meanies – one touch and it's snake-skin belts all round. All this gets really frustrating and after a couple of the tougher levels I couldn't care less whether Atilla got wasted or not!

Even with all these niggly bits, Sneaky Snakes isn't a *complete* disaster. You do get used to frantic gameplay and a lot of the visual problems are forgivable. However, it's not a patch on the original, and there's definitely better games that you could blow your dosh on this month.

STEVE

TOTAL!

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Quite pretty, but the weeny sprites and tendency to blur makes it a bit confusing

Sounds



■ Brilliantly boppy soundtracks and the FX aren't bad. Sounds are it's strength really

Gameplay



■ I dunno. It's NES counterpart was brill' but this 2D play area is just too restrictive

Life span



■ Challenge enough, but the frustrating gameplay will put you off after a bit

Nowhere near as good as Snake, Rattle N Roll on the NES. It's difficult to see clearly and the game-play will frustrate the pants off you,



Final rating
58
Percent

64

ARS

There's a big selection of moves available – the flying drop-kick should ring a few bells – but they all end in the same result: lying on your back in the middle of the ring. Add on the predictable energy level facility and... still reading?

Well that's it. True, the graphics are excellent, but what good does that do when there's no tag-team action, no practice matches, not even a tournament in sight?

Basically, if you beat all four opponents then you've finished the game. And beat them you will. I completed the game within an hour as Hulk Hogan. 'Ea-sy' as Big Daddie would say.

ANDY

TOTAL!

TOTAL!

Looks



■ Bulls eye! Big sprites that move well, plus a neat line in screen shudders

Sounds



■ Tunes are averagely nice to the point of being irritating – don't turn up the volume

Gameplay



■ How many times can you throw a guy round a ring before you get bored?

Life span



■ A couple of hours. Getting the hang of the controls is the most taxing thing here

HALF-NELSONS
Repetitive and dead easy to finish. The gameplay is too predictable for words, really

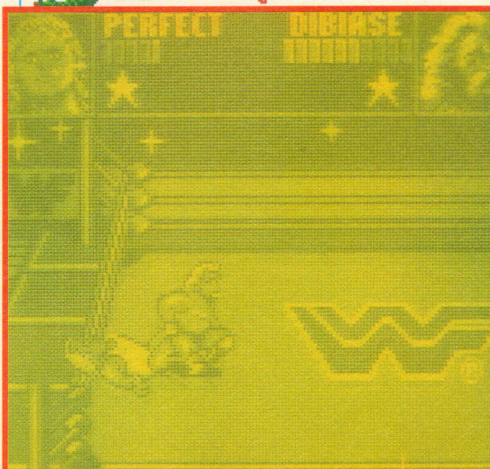


What a bozo! Little variety and easy completion really spoil what could have been an excellent game. Wrestling fans deserve better

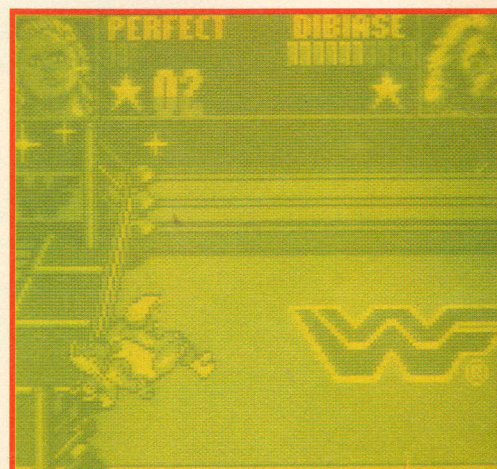
Final rating
49
Percent



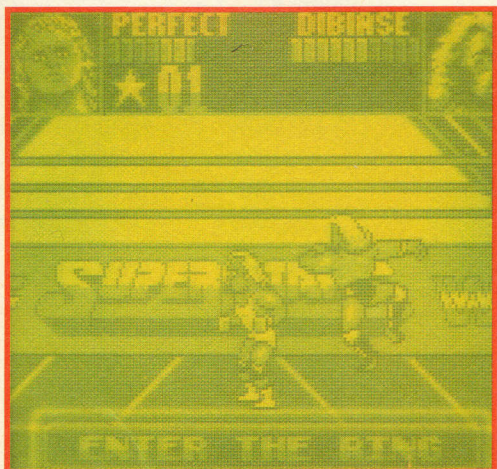
Things are getting nasty now. Mr Perfect has had enough pussy-footing around so he's opted for the 'extremely vicious elbow jab' move. Teddy boy won't be pleased.



Told you so. Mr perfect is now flat on his leotard and Ted is poised for a, well, I don't know what he's poised for really. It looks like he's put his back out to be honest.



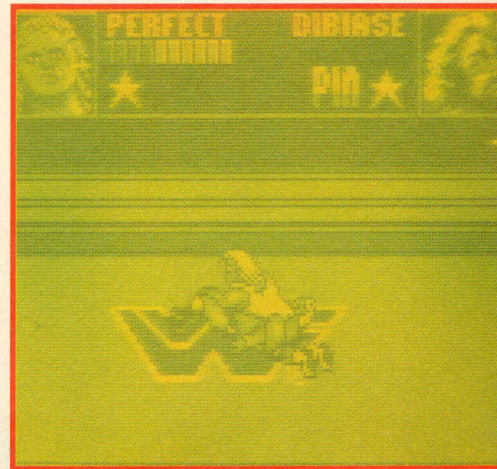
Ah ha! He was preparing for the old 'body press' manoeuvre. Unfortunately he's got it completely wrong and has ended up underneath Mr Perfect (or could it be a bug?).



Oh my. Now they've both left the ring and Ted Dibiase is winding up for an even more bizarre move than the last one. What on earth could he have up his trunks this time?



Well whatever it was, it worked. Oi! Perfect is on his back again. Ted's best bet is to get back in the ring and hope that Mr P gets counted out before he can do the same.



Alas no. He who is without faults has not only made it back in, but he's flattened Million Dollar Ted and successfully pinned him. Who's laughing now Teddy-baby?

OI! YOU'D BETTER BUY SEGA POWER THIS MONTH...

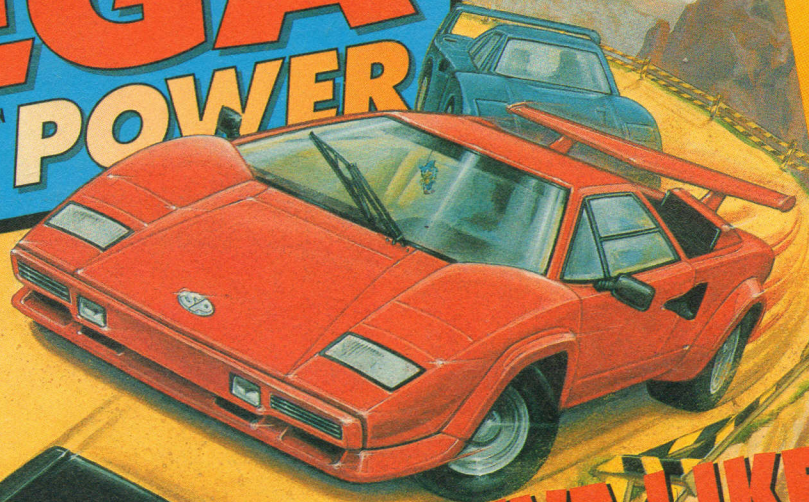
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TOTAL!

TACTIX

Q&A

Ooh! This is new! Yep, to provide yet another invaluable service to our readers, from now on you can write in with your gameplaying problems. We'll either sort them out or ask the other readers if they can help out. Good, eh?

TATANGA ANGER

Dear Steve & Andy,

First I think your mag is brill and cool but I want to know something. I have a Game Boy and the game for it – Super Mario Land, and when I get past the cloud thingy and get to the nasty gun, I can never get past him. In issue 2 on GB TACTIC No. 14 it says: 'Cloud boss Biokinton is easy – just keep clear. Tatanga is trickier – stay in the middle of the screen and watch your own ship, not his.'

Well I've tried staying there as long as I could and I don't know what is supposed to happen. Well never mind, your masterpiece still has everything I want to know and a lot more.

Alison White, Llanelli

Dear Alison,

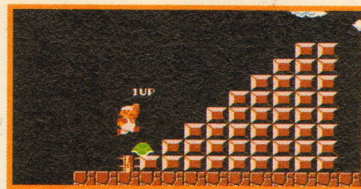
Sorry if you're a bit confused. What I meant was keep to the left hand side of the screen so you can steer clear of Tatanga's bullets. Keep firing all the time, but don't bother looking at Tatanga's ship to check for hits – by keeping an eye on your little craft instead, you have a better chance

of avoiding any bullets that come near. Stay calm and keep firing – eventually you'll blow that sucker up! **STEVE**

KOOPA POOPER

Dear Total,

My name is Carwyn Thomas and I had a Nintendo NES Version for Christmas, so I went and bought TOTAL Magazine. When I was looking through I saw some tips on Super Mario Bros. I saw the one in World 3-1 where at the end you wait for two Koopas to walk down the steps and kill the first one and when the last one reaches the last-but-one step you jump on him and kill him against the wall. Well, when I tried, all I got



Another peek at that fab tip of ours that, er, didn't work. At least not on newer SMB carts.

was 100 points but no extra lives as stated. Please could tell me if I did something wrong.

Carwyn Thomas, Ammanford

Dear Carwyn,

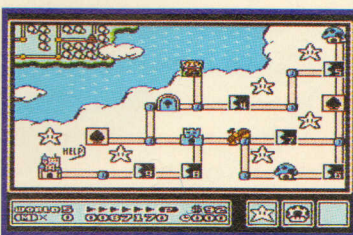
No, you haven't done anything wrong. After we printed that cheat we found out that it only works on really early versions of Super Mario Bros. The newer versions – those in the multi-game cartridges with Tetris or Duck Hunt – won't do it. Also, the newer version runs a lot faster than the old versions, making the game a lot more playable. Weird, huh? **ANDY**

HAMMER MARIO

Dear Thicky & Steve,

I have heard that in Mario Bros 3 you can change into a Hammer Brother but I can't find where. If it is true please could you tell me where it is.

Mark Toole, Huyton



The hammer suit is around here somewhere, um, sorry, that's it. Can anyone out there help?

Dear Mark,

It is true, but it only happens at one point. You have to go to world 5 and cross over to the white cloudy bit. Then, erm... well, er, have a good look around. It's in one of Toad's Mushroom Houses.

THICKY

TURTLE SOUP

Dear Thicky,

In your first issue, TOTAL Tactix Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles page 58, the first half of the map was completely black in my edition which caused great amusement to my son as he said, 'They must be swimming under cover of darkness'.

Now for my second whine. In the second edition I thought that I could now progress with this game using Total Tactix for the game but on level 2, your tactix tip said, 'Rockets top left of map, spin up though the gap, pick up the rockets and just walk over the gap. Drop down etc, etc'. Well I can't! I've tried and tried but each time I



Use Leo to jump up through the gap (left) and it should work. If not, walk the gap (right).

can't reach the top, so I fight my way across and up to the top level, only to be unable to cross the gap, start again and eventually die. It's driving me crazy! Please explain why.

Dave (Extremely Frustrated) Taylor, Glastonbury

Dear Dave,

Yeah, sorry about the map. Occasionally our Linotron (a magic device which makes the pages) has a funny turn and messes things up. Still, if you follow the numbers you should be all right.

If you can't jump up to the gap, go the long way around and when you come to the gap, don't jump it, walk it. Push left and just walk straight across. Ha! Easy (even for me).

THICKY



We expect you're wondering where our NES Batman solution is. Well, to be honest, we tried to play it and were, erm... crap. We couldn't get anywhere. Besides, we don't have enough time to do all the Tactix, it's about time you sent some in. So, for next issue, we want your full Batman player's guides.

There's a big bagfull of Batman goodies on offer to the best guide! Send 'em in to Batman Tactix, TOTAL!, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.



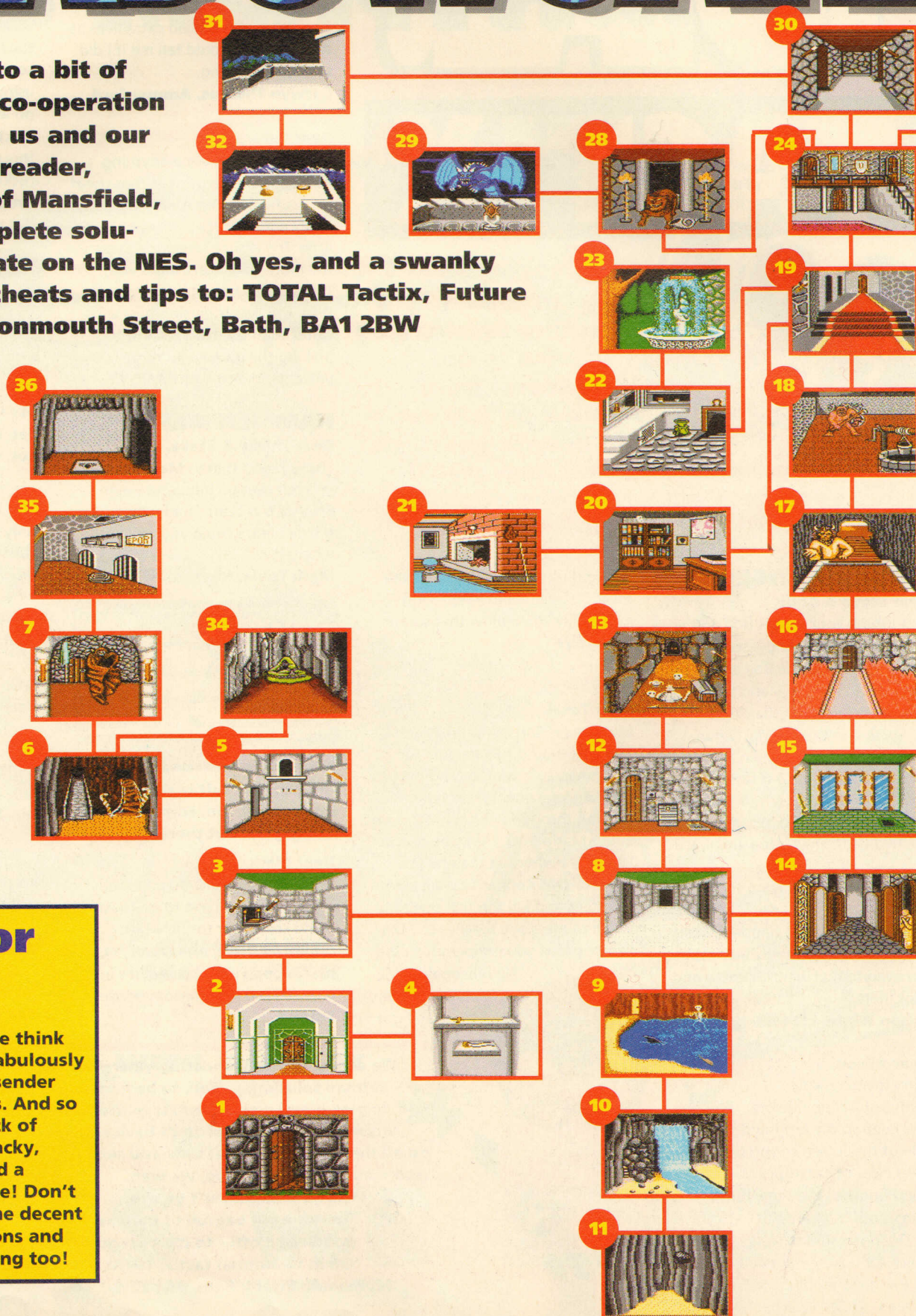
SHADOWGATE



Thanks to a bit of friendly co-operation between us and our beloved reader,

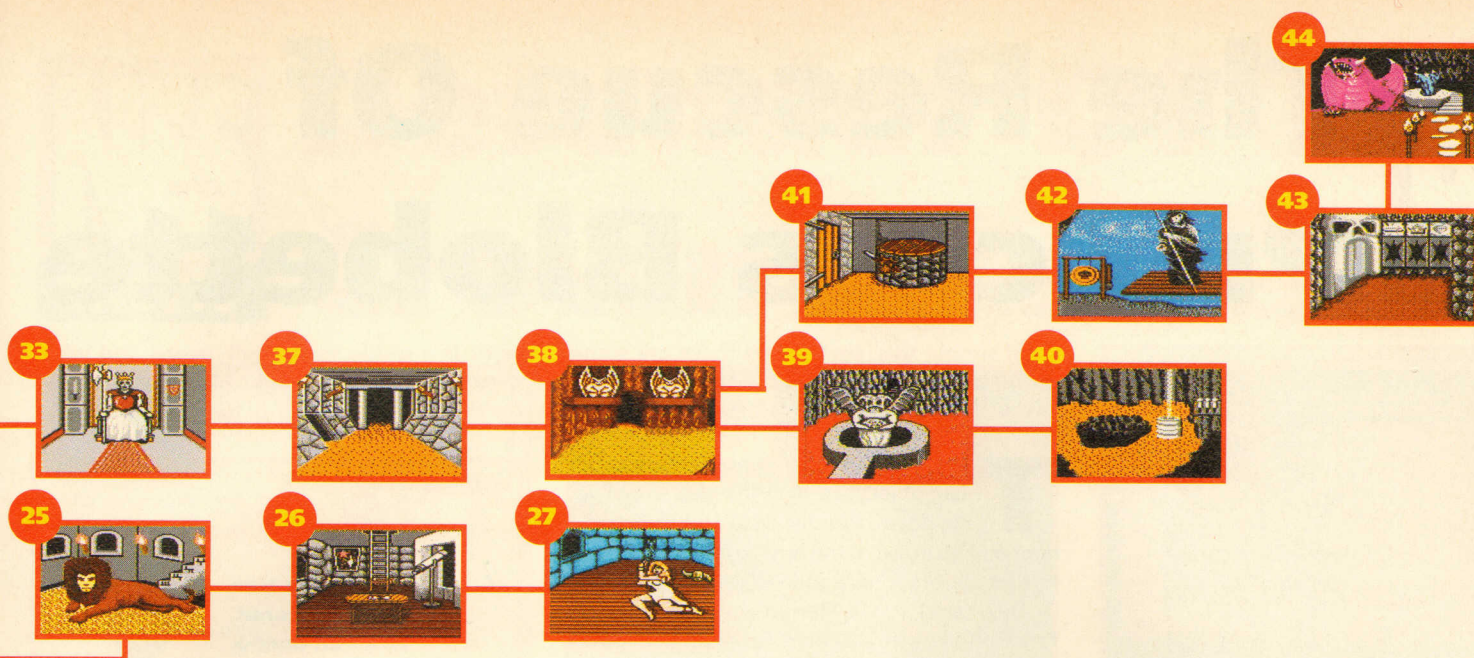
Sharon Wilcock of Mansfield, we have the complete solu-

tion to Shadowgate on the NES. Oh yes, and a swanky map. Send your cheats and tips to: **TOTAL Tactix**, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW



Money for nothing!

Well, prizes anyway. We think this solution is so fantabulously groovesome, that the sender deserves some goodies. And so it is that Sharon Wilcock of Mansfield gets some tacky, TOTAL merchandise and a year's subscription, free! Don't be a geek. Send us some decent tips, cheats and solutions and you might get something too!



About the map...

Because of the way the game displays the rooms, the exits on our map don't always correspond to the doors on the piccies. For example, the right-hand door on picture eight actually leads to picture nine. Still, follow both the map and the solution carefully and you'll be fine.

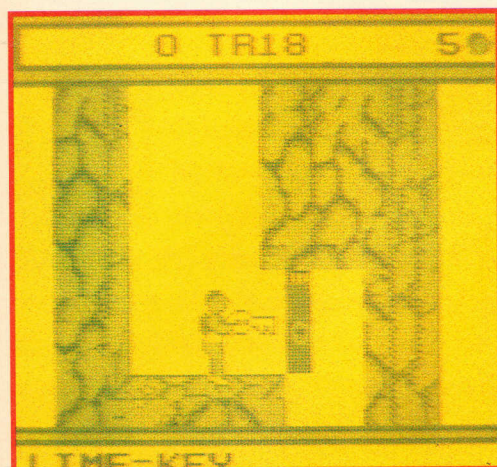
The fun starts here...

1 Open the skull above the door. Take key and open door. Move forward.
2 Take both torches. Use the key on the wooden door. Move forward.
3 Take the two torches. One of them is special and will be stored separately. Open the book to reveal Key 2 in the info window (top right). Take key 2 and move backwards.
2 Use Key 2 on slim grey door.
4 Enter cupboard and take the sword and the sling. Move back out and move forward.
3 Hit white stone on far wall and move inside.
5 Take arrow. Use torch on left. Move inside.
6 Move over the strong bridge.
7 Use lit torch on the special torch – this gets rid of the wraith. Take the cloak and move all the way back to the corridor with the book.
8 Move forward to the corridor with the three doors and open them all. Move right.
9 Open the door in the wall and move forward.
10 Take the stones on the floor and move behind the waterfall.
11 Hit the loose rock and take the bag.
8 Move back to the hallway and move left.
12 Take the torches, open the wooden door then move forward.
13 Take the shield first. You can only take three things at once so keep moving out then back in again until you've collected everything bar the chest. Move back.
12 Open bag one and use white stone on the little hole in the far wall. Take sphere and go back to the room with the skeleton on the lake.
9 Use the sphere on the lake then take key 3 from the skeleton. Using the burning torch on the lake then take the sphere.
8 Go back to hallway and this time go forward.
14 Open the coffin on the right and use the burning torch on the mummy. Take the sceptre and move forward to the next room.

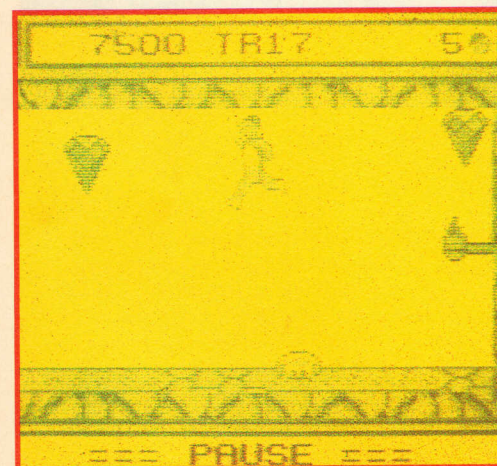
15 Use the hammer on the middle mirror and use key 3 on the door that has been exposed. Take the torches and the broom, use the cloak on yourself and now move through the door.
16 Use the sphere on the flames, open the door and move forward.
17 Try to move forward again then use the spear on the troll. Move forward.
18 Use the handle on the well and open the bucket. Take the gauntlet. Use a stone on the sling then use the sling on the cyclops. Open the door move forward.
19 Take the torch. Move first left.
20 Take the book, map and skull. Open the desk drawer and take the glasses, key and scrolls. Use the glasses on yourself and open and read the book and scrolls to learn some spells. Open bag one and take out the red gem. Use the red gem on the hole next to the bookcase. Move forward.
21 Take the bellows, poker and cup. Use the Terra Terrak spell, open the globe and take the bottle and key.
19 Move back to the hallway and move through the second left exit.
22 Take everything on the shelves. Take the horseshoe. There's a stone on the floor with a handle on it. Use it and take the holy water that's inside. Move forward (to the right).
23 Use the gauntlet on yourself. Take the flute and use the flute. Take the ring from the tree, and move back to the corridor.
19 Open the door and move forward.
24 Use the burning torch on the rug. Take the key, mirror and crest and use keys 4, 5 and 6 to open the doors. Move through top right door.
25 Try moving right again past sphinx. When it asks you a riddle, use the object to which it is referring on the sphinx itself. Move right.
26 Take and open the scroll. Take the star off the star map and open the star map. Take the lightning rod and move forward.
27 Use the arrow on the woman. Take the blade and move back to the banqueting hall.
24 Take the top left exit.
28 Move toward the ladder. Use the holy water on the hellhound and take the horn. Move up the ladder.
29 Use star on the wyvern. Take the talisman and move back to the banqueting hall.

24 Move through the middle door.
30 Take the torches and move left.
31 Use the lightning rod on the hole in the balcony wall. Take the wand, and move left.
32 Take the bag. Move back to the corridor.
30 Move right.
33 Use the sceptre on the skeleton. Use the ring on the ring shaped hole that has appeared to the right. Now move all the way back to the bit where the two bridges are.
6 Use bottle two on yourself and move over the rickety bridge.
34 Use the wand on the serpent and take the staff. Move back.
6 Move over the strong bridge.
7 Open the door and move forward.
35 Take everything off the shelf. Look carefully at the far wall. There's a door in the middle of it. Open the door and move forward.
36 Open Bag one, take blue gem and use it on the hole in the floor. Open the scroll. Go all the way back to where the troll on the bridge was.
17 Use the Humana spell. Move forward.
18 Use a stone on the sling and the sling on the cyclops as before.
33 Move forward to where the skeleton king is and move into the secret passage in the floor.
37 Take the torches and move forward.
38 Now move forward-right.
39 Use the Motari spell and move forward.
40 Now move the set of three handles as follows. Move right handle down, move middle handle down, move right handle up. Take the orb and move back to the room where two gargoyles are guarding the door.
38 Use the illumina spell so that it's now safe to move forward.
41 Open the well. Open bag 3, take the big coin and a gold coin. Use the big coin on the well. Move down the well.
42 Use the gong beater on the gong. Use the gold coin on the sinister ferryman, and move onto the raft.
43 Use the talisman on the hole with the sword above it. Use the horn then move left.
44 Use the blade on your staff, then use the orb on your staff. Now use the staff on the Behemoth and by gum, by juniper, and by the warlock lord's underpants, you've done it. Now sit back and praise she-god Sharon Wilcock.

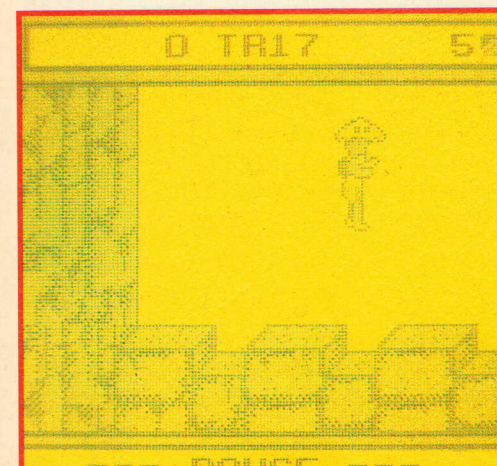
The Rescue Of Princess Blobette



This is where you start your adventure. Trampoline up to get some jellybeans, then turn blob into a key to open the door.



More trampolining antics on this screen. Use it to leap up and collect the diamonds. Watch out for the burning torch though.



Oh my word, I dunno what I'm doing here. There's nowt to see and nowt to collect so it's probably best to avoid it altogether.

Dead simple this. On the left there are some screenshots (pretty aren't they?), in the middle is the complete solution and on the

Turn Blob into a trampoline to get the bag of jellybeans on the next screen up. Go down, turn him into a key, open the door and go down to the next screen. (Try turning him into a rocket here and see what happens).

Now (after you've started again and got this far), turn him into a bubble. Go right, then down and get the bag of jellybeans (don't do down any further or your bubble won't float).

Go right and up and explore all these screens to collect the peppermints for extra lives. Now go back to the screen where you turned him into a bubble and go down the hole (still in the bubble).

Now go right to the end. Set the trampoline to the left of the torch, bounce then throw a mint jelly bean – the fire should be put out (it might take a few goes to get it exactly right). Get the gems and go back left as far as you can.

Turn Blob into a hole and go down to the next screen. Get the peppermint and go right (carefully). Use the ladder or trampoline to get on top of the machine (with the trampoline you'll need to turn him into a hummingbird to get him back).

Now turn him into a monkey wrench and throw him into the machine to switch it off. Use the old trampoline and hummingbird routine to get past the machine.

On the next screen position Blob underneath the hole (use umbrella) then turn him into a jack to throw at the lock. Now carry on to the lift screen.

Here's where the clever bit comes in! What you should do is go down (in the bubble's best) and collect all the diamonds and coins and push the switch to make the lift go upwards. Then go back up to the top – where you are now but on the other side.

Done that? Well here's an easier way! Position Blob right on the edge as close as you can. Now turn him into a trampoline and jump over onto the lift about half way up the screen (you need to get the timing right) and carry on running. You should make it onto the other ledge.

Get him back (hummingbird), go right, get the diamond and go down. Now try and keep the Blob to the left of you (turn him into something if necessary) and throw a mint jellybean into the pot – it will freeze over. Use the trampoline and bounce right up to the top – step off then jump onto the ledge. Use the hummingbird again to retrieve him.

Blob will release the Princess and she runs off. Now use the umbrella to go back down. Go left and just by the ledge turn him into a trampoline – bounce up to the top room (recognise it?). Now go left a few screens and Blob and Princess Blobette will be re-united. Like, wow.

right is a guide to the jellybeans and what they do. Thanks to Roger Mills of Cwmbran for this brilliant solution. Have a goodie bag.

The beans

Coconut jellybeans turn Blob into a coconut.
Why? Er, dunno.



Cola jellybeans turn him into a bubble for the boy to ride in.



Apple jellybeans transform the fat little fellow into a jack.



Lime flavoured beans change him into a key.
Very important!



Vanilla beans create an umbrella to make long drops a lot safer.



Tangerine beans for trampolines. Reach those high-up places.



Vanilla beans create an umbrella to make long drops a lot safer.



Honey beans turn Blob into a bird so he can fly to you if he gets stuck.



Ketchup beans don't make ketchup. They make Blob 'catch up'.



Licorice beans turn Blob into a ladder, again to reach high places.



Strawberry beans build bridges. Strawberries? Bridges? Er, yeah right.



Root Beer means rocket. Impressive but, unfortunately, utterly useless.



Don't feed mint beans to Blob. They're for cooling things down.

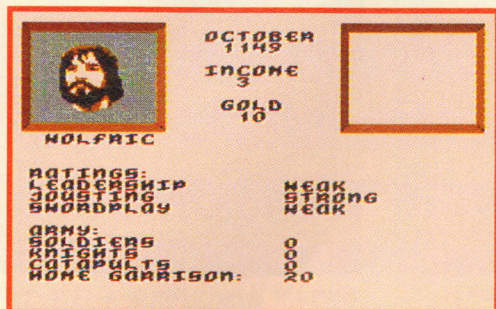


Punch beans make holes in the floor for the boy to jump down.



Defender Of The Crown

Right, now there are lots of ways to win, but here's a very specific way of defeating the Normans, becoming King of all England and seeing the end screen. It's a sure-fire winner (well it works every time for me!).



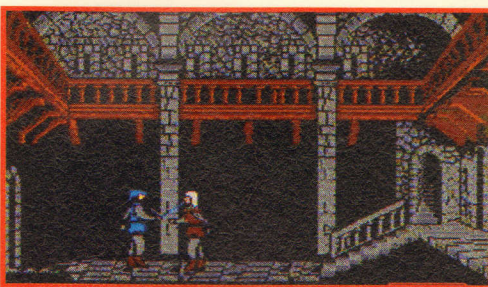
1 At the very beginning, choose Wolfric The Wild and start your campaign from Clwyd. If the game starts you anywhere else, reset the NES and start again.



2 Go to Conquest. Transfer 15 men into your army and move to Gloucester. If you get attacked on the next round, def' it out and start again.



3 Go to Buy Army – you should now have 20 gold pieces in your treasury, so go and treat yourself to a catapult and put 5 more men in your army.



4 You will probably be asked to rescue the princess at this point. If you manage to get her, well done, but don't worry if you get wasted. (You can even ignore her cries if you can't face the awful swordfighting bit.)



5 Go to Conquest. Move the army back to your home castle. Transfer the catapult and men into your army, leaving two to hold the fort. Move back through Gloucester and enter Dorset. You won't meet any resistance.



6 Go to Conquest. When it asks you to select an area, point to Sherwood Forest so you can ask Robin Hood for help. Now move the pointer to the castle in Cornwall and press fire!



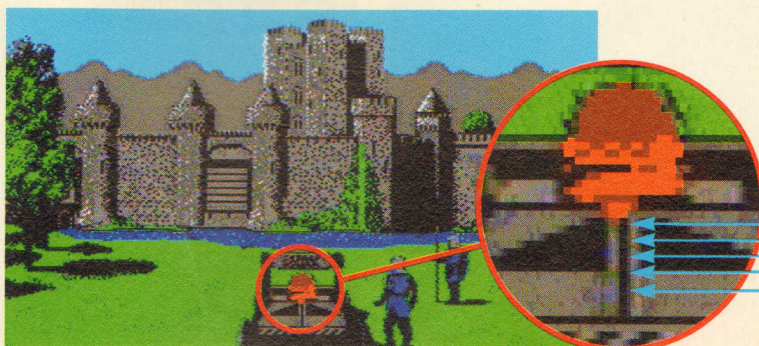
7 First, lob in some disease to reduce the enemy numbers by ten. Now, you need to get at least four hits on the wall (see Catapult). In battle, swap between Ferocious Attack and Bombard to ensure victory!



8 By capturing Cornwall you also win his land – you should now own all of the counties along the coast. Without delay go and lay siege to Buckingham in exactly the same way that you did Cornwall.



9 Right, by now you should own huge amounts of England and have loads of dosh in the bank. From this position you've got to be a complete moron not to be able to defeat Norfolk and finish the game!



Catapult

To make sure you destroy castle walls, release the fire button when the very *bottom* of the catapult hits these marks. For the last one (5), just quickly tap the fire button.

GENERAL TIPS

If you think this doesn't offer much of a challenge, start from another castle and use these tips:

- Leave the other Saxon forces alone. They stop the Normans from taking too much land.
- If you take any of the rich land down south, slap a castle on it to protect it from being recaptured.
- Buy knights to men in a ratio of about 1:10. Knights win land battles, but are crap during sieges.
- Hold Tournaments and play for land. They're a doddle to win and you can pick up loads of land.
- Raid Cornwall – he's usually got the most dosh.

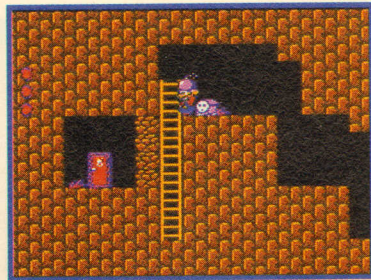
Super Mario Bros. 2

Okey-dokey, it's been a long time comin' but here it is. Part one of the complete solution to Super Mario Bros. 2. Have a crack at this bit then next month we'll blow the lid on the last two worlds of the game. And if that ain't enough... tough!

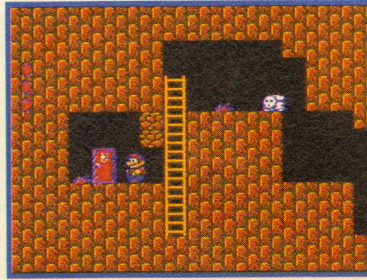
1 How to get to the end of 1.1 real quick like!



Enter the cave and climb the vine. Go right for a run up and jump left over the waterfall.



Jump up, avoiding the enemy. Pick up a bomb. A few seconds after it starts flashing, drop it.

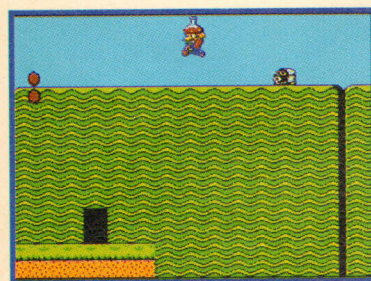


If you timed it right (it takes practise) a hole is opened in the wall. Now go through the door.

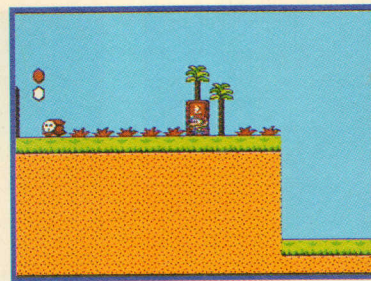


Hurrah! Here's the guardian. Kill it by jumping on the eggs and then lobbing them back at it.

2 How to collect lots of luvverly coins (on any level)



Unless you need a flask to reach a warp zone, you can use 'em to get lots of coins, like this:

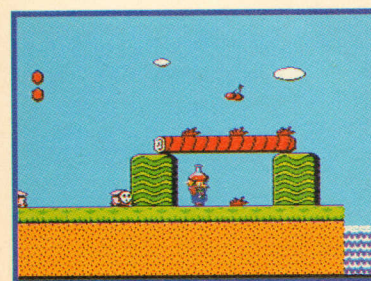


Always take the flask to the nearest row of vegetables before dropping it, then...

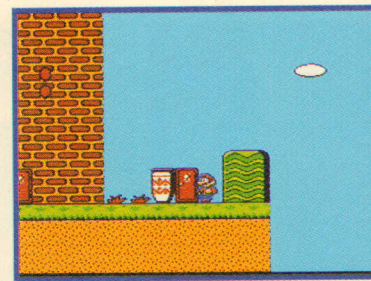


... When you enter the 'weird' zone, there are lots of coin-bearing plants to be had.

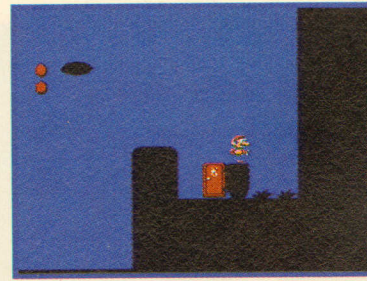
3 Whizzing to world four - warp style



Find this log on level 1.3 and get the plant on the left. Don't drop it quite yet. Move right.

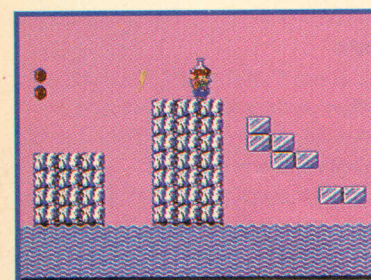


After avoiding a few enemies you'll come to this. Now drop the flask right next to the vase.

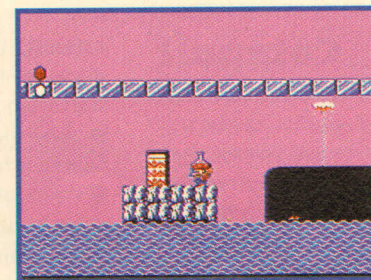


Enter the door. Once inside the 'decidedly odd' zone, jump up onto the vase and pull down.

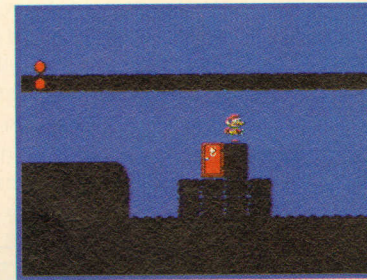
4 Skip world five, it's dull anyway



Get to this point in world 4.2 and unearth the plant from this 'ere platform. Now go right.



When you finally reach this bit (it'll take quite a few goes) drop the flask right next to the vase.



Enter the door and once inside the 'strangely blue zone' enter the vase to warp to world six.

Crikey!

That was easy. But what are we gonna do about the really tough worlds?

Continued
next
month!



Mmm... well if you hope to have even the slightest chance of getting past this vile serpent above you'd best come back next month. We've got you this far the easy way, but in issue five we'll give you everything you need to get through worlds six and seven. We know what we're doing ('cos a reader sent us the solution).



Secret level – BKKBKKHMBHMB

Level one with loads of gear – KMBKMBHMBHMB

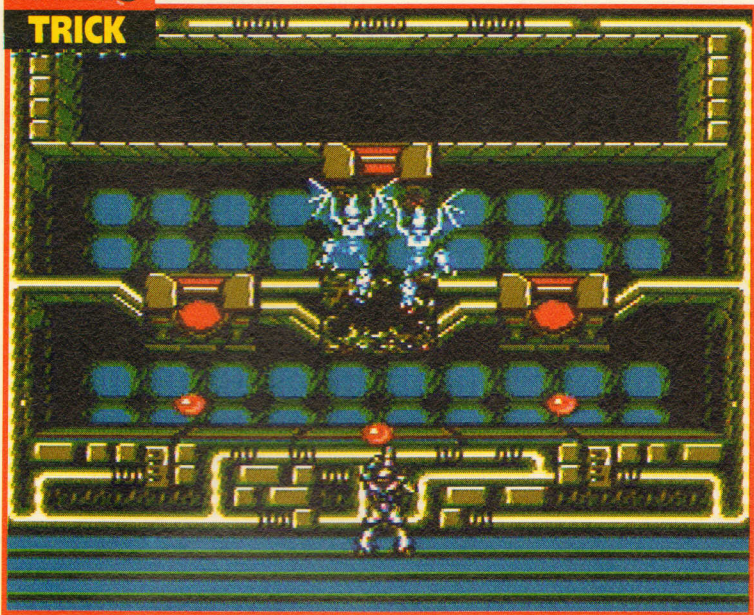
Make up your own codes by mix 'n' matching the following – HMB, KGB, DNB, KMB, BHB, PHB, OHB and ZHB.

Come on now, everybody. All stand up and say after me, 'thank you **Andrew Bellamy** of Sheffield for sending us in that particular piece of information.' That was lovely. You can all sit back down again now.



PROBOTECTOR

On the title screen press up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, B, A, START before the music stops for 30 lives. Cheers, to **David Gordon** of County Tyrone for that.



GRADIUS

This is Nemesis by any other name, but that doesn't make the game any easier. If you need some help

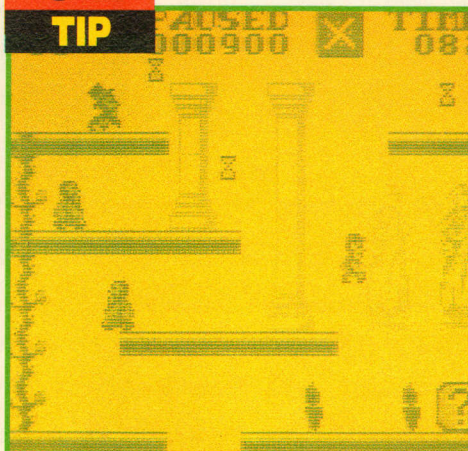
against the aliens, pause the game then press up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, B, A. Now, when you un-pause it again you'll have a shield and two options.

Many thanks to **Paul Shanks** of Lockley for that useful little cart-busting tipette.



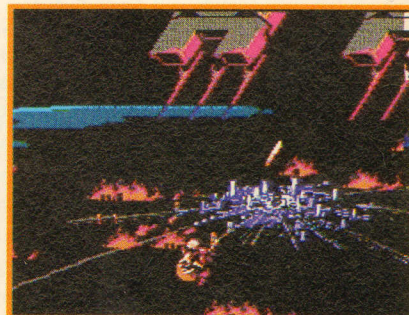
BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT GAME BOY ADVENTURE

Having problems, dude? That's totally bogus! To help you out, here are some excellent codes for all ten time zones...



ISOLATED WARRIOR

Level 2 – 1227
Level 3 – 0501
Level 4 – 0948
Level 5 – 2168
Level 6 – 0666
Level 7 – 1192

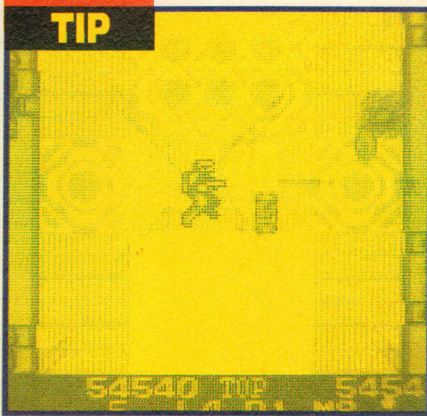


From **Michael** and **Adam Logan**
of Consett in County Durham.
Now *you* can try the last level!



BURAI FIGHTER

This bostin' Game Boy shooter (reviewed on page 54, by the way) really benefits from having a passcode system. And it also means that **Bob Cruwys** of Devon can send them in for everyone else to use. Mucho gracias Bob.



EAGLE

Level 2 – HGKM
Level 3 – CPFG
Level 4 – JJCM
Level 5 – DKLF

ALBATROSS

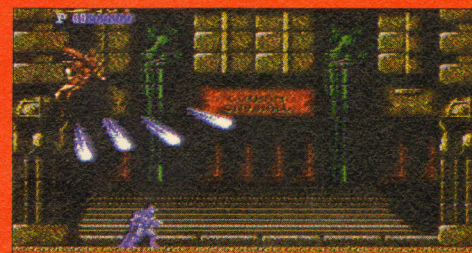
Level 2 – HGNC
Level 3 – BMHB
Level 4 – DGBF
Level 5 – JGJH

ACE

Level 2 – GBHL
Level 3 – MHCB
Level 4 – CDMN
Level 5 – KDPG

Next month

Well, tip-fans, have we got a stonky cheat-filled *Tyrannosaurus Rex* of a Tactix for you in issue 5!? We'll have complete player's guides to Fortified Zone on the Game Boy and Maniac Mansion on the NES. And you won't forget to send in your complete solutions to Batman, will you? The address is TOTAL Tactix, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.



If you can finish Batman on the NES, why not send in your tips. We've got Bat goodies a-plenty to be given away!

TOTAL RECALL

The definitive guide to Nintendo games (and what we think of them)

Picture it: Saturday afternoon. You're about to buy a new game, but can't remember which ones got the best rating. Here's a run-down of all the games reviewed so far. Month by month it'll build up into, well, a pretty big list!



★ Geek fodder
★★ Sniggersome
★★★ Fair to middling
★★★★ Kinda dudey
★★★★★ Stonkingly spiff!



Here it is, the bit where we list all the games reviewed so far. Not only that but we give them a special little star rating. (That was my idea and Steve was so jealous he sulked for two months afterwards... Ha!)

A Boy And His Blob
Nintendo/Absolute Ent'
1 player £30



Blow into your hanky, and there it is, the inspiration for A Boy and His Blob. Snot-like alien Blobert teams up with an earth boy called... er... Boy (!) to help him save the planet Blobolonia from the evil Emperor. OK, so there's some good, original ideas in this one, plus tidy backdrops and neat animation, but that's about it. There's only two levels, lots of wandering around in big open spaces and not much action. All in all, pretty slow and pretty dull.

★★

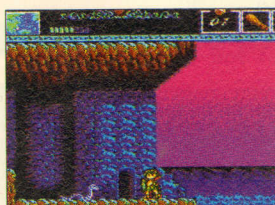
Batman
Sunsoft
1 player £40



Grab your sister's tights and let's go. Gotham City needs de-Jokering and you're the man for the job. There are five massive levels to this tough platform game, with over 15 different baddies to batter and loads to discover as Batman smoothly walks, jumps and shoots past beautiful back-grounds. The action is fast, unrelenting and the detailed graphics create a real atmosphere. OK, it's not an original idea but even if you're not a Batfan, it's a challenge!

★★★★

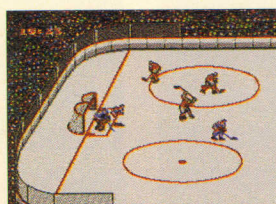
Battle Of Olympus
Nintendo/Imagineer
1 player £30



Here's a truly engrossing, highly playable quest that offers terrific value for money. Slice 'n' dice action breaks up the adventuring, and there's loads to discover. Pretty graphics and an enthralling game world. Lovely!

★★★★★

Blades of Steel
Konami/Palcom
2 player £35



Okay so the graphics aren't brilliant, and there are annoying in-betweeny screens that you can't opt out of. But if you want a highly playable two-player ice hockey game, this'll keep you (and a friend) thrilled for months.

★★★★

Boulder Dash
First Star Software
1-2 players £25



24 levels of brain-busting action await, as you collect dozens of diamonds from underground caverns without getting squished by falling boulders. It's addictive, challenging and looks better than ever – a classic! (Sigh, if only old Misery Guts Jarratt improved with age...)

★★★★★

Bubble Bobble
Taito
1-2 players £25



This age-old classic has 226 levels of the most frantic, addictive platform action that your NES can chuck at you. A simultaneous two-player option is the icing on the cake of this perfect arcade-to-NES conversion. It's a bit easy to finish because of unlimited continue options, but it's still great fun to come back to time after time after time.

★★★★

Captain Planet
Mindscape
1 player £40



The environment is having a pretty bad time of it. There's oil in the oceans, toxic waste in the rivers and dead dolphins all

over the place. Take on the role of Captain Planet and defeat the polluters using special vehicles and five different super powers in this scrolling shoot 'em up and maze exploration game. Good graphics, and loads of variety.

★★★★★

Captain Skyhawk
Nintendo/Rare
1 player £25



Mindless, violent, uncaring – and loads of fun! Super-smooth graphics and adrenaline-inducing action combine to make Captain Skyhawk a superb all-round blast 'em up. Each mission features three varied stages, with the chance to soup-up your plane's weaponry at the end. Simple, but a great tension-reliever.

★★★★

Defender Of The Crown
Palcom/Konami
1 player £40



Dust off the old grey matter, it's brain-ache time again... or is it? You play one of six knights on a quest to become the new monarch. Raise armies, then use your cunning

and skill to decide who to attack first. Strategy games can be brill, but this one doesn't quite have enough to cut the mustard. A little too easy.

★★★

Dragons' Lair

Elite

1 player £35



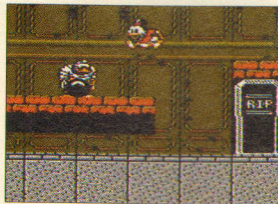
The laser disc arcade game looked fab when it appeared years ago but it was as dull as ditchwater. This version is a complete departure, gameplay-wise, and features lots of intriguing puzzle elements. And the animation (especially on Dirk the hero) is pretty amazing. A very stylish version of the Dragon's Lair game which works really well.

★★★★

Duck Tales

Capcom

1 player £40



If you're a Disney fan then this is the game for you. It's a standard running and jumping game with good animation and groovy characters. Pretty playable but past that there's nothing unusual about this cart. You've probably already got several similar games.

★★★

Digger T. Rock - The Legend Of The Lost City

Milton Bradley/Rare

1 player £35



This game is smoothly presented, with colourful graphics and some slick animation. There's also a lot to explore and discover, but it's dull! The levels are too big and it's frustrating and annoying.

★★★

Gauntlet II

Mindscape

1-4 players £40



Digitised speech, ultra-smooth scrolling and simultaneous four-player baddie-blasting action. As near to a perfect arcade conversion as your NES will see. With over 100 levels, this is a real gem – great fun, especially with friends.

★★★★

Goal!

Jaleco

1-2 players £40



This is soccer all right, but set in America. It's easy to see why the yanks are so pathetic at the game. Lousy graphics, abysmal sound effects, slow action, confusing gameplay – Goal! is unrealistic and very frustrating.

★★

Isolated Warrior

Nintendo/Vap Inc.

1 player £35



Spooky alien graphics plus loads of power-ups and add-ons that give this 3D-ish shoot 'em up bags of atmosphere. The huge levels tend to drag on a bit, and the visuals get a bit flickery at times, but it's fast, furious fun.

★★★★

Ivan 'Iron Man' Stewart's Super Off Road

Nintendo/Trade West

1-4 players £25



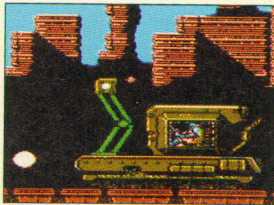
Eight different dirt-tracks await you and up to three of your chums for a day of off-road racing. You view the tracks from above as you make mincemeat of your opponents. However, it's far too easy – so either play it with your friends (great fun!) or give it a miss.

★★★

Low G Man

Nintendo Taxan Group

1 player £25



What can we say? Low G man has it all! It's all fast 'n' furious with wonderfully vast levels, beautifully drawn graphics and frantic soundtracks. Add to that the brilliant weapons and gadgetry and you've got a real mind blower. It's huge, it's playable and it's ingenious. Swoonsome stuff!

★★★★★

Maniac Mansion

Jaleco/Lucasfilm Games

1 player £55



An ancient menu-driven arcade adventure that has been revamped for the NES. The graphics are humorous, the puzzles are ingenious and you get to control several characters at once. It was brilliant years ago and it still is today. Shame about the price though.

★★★★

Marble Madness

Milton Bradley/Rare

1-2 players £40



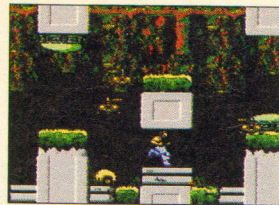
What a shame! While this is an excellent graphic conversion of the ageing arcade classic, that's about it! There are only six levels which are all pretty easy, so it won't last long. Only real fans will get a kick out of this.

★★★

Power Blade

Taito

1 player £35



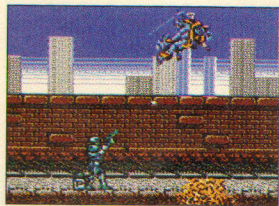
Nova, owner of the legendary Power Blade, must rid the planet of rampaging robots. Big challenge, eh? You'd think so, but despite some rip-roaring sound effects and impressive-looking beasties, this game's a bit of a doddle. There are only two difficulty levels: normal and expert, and the guardians are weedy. You'll be through it in a week!

★★

Robocop

Ocean

1 player £40



It's a fun stomp-and-blast 'em up with action and visuals to back it up. But it doesn't leave you crying for more – it's too easy and only the last few levels are going to put up any sort of a struggle. Buy it and you could feel a bit robbed.

★★★

Roller Games

Konami

1 player £40



The fave sport of the 21st century. A bit on the odd side this one, but there's a good mix of hazard-jumping and people-punching to keep you coming back for more.

★★★★

Shadow Gate

Kemco

1 player £40



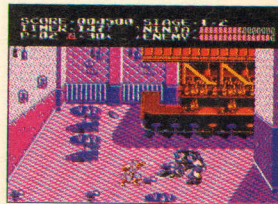
You're a royal dude with a long heritage to defend against the big bad beastie Behemoth. Yes, it's another magical mystery tour to track down evil-doers, and there are plenty of places to visit. The puzzles are pretty taxing too, and this game would be fun if only you didn't keep dying, dying, DYING all the time! Frustration city.

★★★

Shadow Warriors

Tecmo

1 player £35



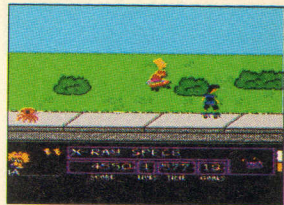
This game went down a storm in America, which doesn't say a lot for American game players. The levels are pretty huge and the graphics are varied. So it's a bit sad that the frustrating gameplay and extremely awkward controls make it a beat 'em up to avoid... unless you're beat 'em up mad.

★★

The Simpsons - Bart Vs The Space Mutants

Acclaim

1 player £40



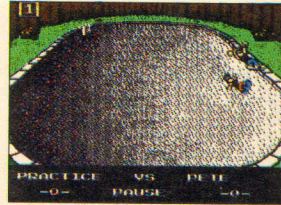
You play Bart Simpson on a frantic skateboard-propelled mission to foil the Space Mutants. Bart must solve puzzles to collect all the everyday objects from five levels of horizontally-scrolling suburbia. There's sampled speech, groovy music and lots of humour. But it's very tough and there's no password system. One for the pro's.

★★★★

Skate Or Die

Palcom/Konami

1-2 players £25



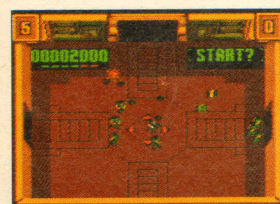
You can skate, you can die or there is one other choice – do neither and spend your money on something else. The game consists of five sub-games or events, none of which are particularly inspiring, while some really stink. Skate Or Die? Hello, Death!

Ski Or Die
Palcom/Konami
1-2 players £40



Ever get a sense of déjà vu? (that means 'been here before' for all you non-French-speaking types). Well Ski Or Die is just like Skate Or Die... with more white in it. More forgettable capers in five snow-capped events, although there is some neat animation. Best for solo players.

Smash T.V.
Acclaim
1-4 players £40



The impressive thing about this arcade game was the huge amount of opponents on screen at once. The NES version has almost as many, making it an incredibly frantic blaster. It might not be varied enough for long-term fun though.

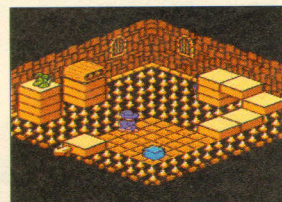
Snake, Rattle N Roll
Nintendo/Rare
1-2 players £25



A cracking 3D, scrolly collect 'em up-type game with two slithery snakes, Rattle and Roll. Simultaneous two-player action is the real hook, as the dynamic duo explore 11 levels of the prettiest graphics you ever did see if you play your

NES with a chum, club together and treat yourselves. It's a blinkin' stunner.

Solstice
Nintendo/Software Creations
1 player £30



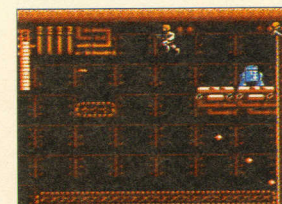
Gob-smacking graphics and dreamy animation combine to create a fantasy 3D world for you to explore. Over 250 different rooms (blimey!) await the attention of your heroic character, Shadax. Solstice is highly playable and just oozes with class.

Solar Jetman - Hunt For The Golden Warship
Nintendo/Rare
1 player £30



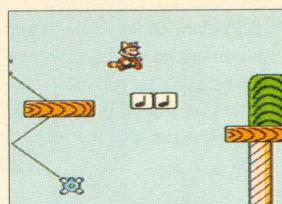
Boldly go where no man's gone before and explore 12 huge levels of alien-blasting, power up-collecting, jet pack-thrusting action. With a massive task and a password-entry system, shooting explore 'em ups don't come much better than this!

Star Wars
JVC/Lucasfilm Games
1 player £50



Only 15 years after the film comes NES Star Wars. And like its celluloid counterpart it's a bit of an epic. It's mainly a platform shoot 'em up with a few spaceshippy bits thrown in. The graphics are wonderful and you can take on the role of Luke or any one of his buddies. But the price is a joke.

Super Mario Bros 3
Nintendo
1-2 players £40



The greatest, the ultimate, the champ, la crème de la crème, la pièce de resistance the, er, chicken vol-au-vent (!?) of video games. Quite simply, this is the most stunning platform game your NES (or any other console for that matter) will ever, ever have the honour of running. So if you only have one NES game, you'd better make sure it's this one.

Swords And Serpents
Acclaim
1-4 players £35



This game takes four players, and boy does it need 'em! Choose your own party of adventurers, head off dungeonwards to slay the evil serpent, do lots of fighting and exploring, plus a bit of buying and selling. Plenty of playability-- with 16 levels -- plus excellent control and auto-mapping to make life easier. The scenery's a bit bland, but the animated characters more than make up for it, and you're never very far from a good old bout of fisticuffs!

Terminator 2
LJN Ltd
1 player £40



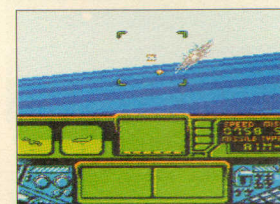
A spiffy little game-of-the-film which sticks close to the plot. Mostly platform beat 'em up action, but there's also a motorcycling bit to break up the boredom. Some graphical touches are gorgeous but the gameplay is weak in places.

Time Lord
Milton Bradley/Rare
1 player £35



Medieval England, the Wild West, a Caribbean Pirate Ship, World War II and 2999AD -- five levels of puzzle-solving, time-travelling tedium. Time Lord has some great ideas, as our hero tries to collect cunningly hidden orbs, but sloppy programming lets the show down.

Top Gun - The Second Mission
Konami
1-2 players £40



Do you feel the need for speed? Well soon you'll feel the need for a quick lie down. Top Gun throws you into the hot seat of an F-14 Tomcat for a very tough flight. It features amazingly fast, stomach-churning visuals and an almost faultless control system enabling barrel-rolls and loop-the-loops. Trouble is, it's a bit hard. In fact it's only slightly less difficult than underwater pole-vaulting.

Trog
Acclaim
1-2 players £30



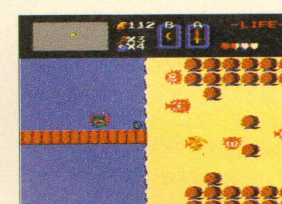
If you remember a game called Pac Man then this is it brought bang up to date. If not, it's a 50 level maze game in which you (or you and a friend) run around the screen collecting eggs before the hungry cavemen eat you. There are lots of hazards, lots of pickups and some great animation throughout. But it's too easy and it gets incredibly dull.

WWF Wrestle Mania Challenge
LJN Ltd/Rare
1-2 players £35



Are you a Hulk Hogan fan? Then you may think this is for you, but wait a second -- underneath, this game's a real lightweight. It's too easy, repetitive and graphically tame. Initially you may think it's fun, but you'll be lucky if you get more than a day's entertainment.

The Legend Of Zelda
Nintendo
1 player £40



Set in the ancient and chaotic land of Hyrule, the princess Zelda has to be rescued by brave young Link (you). Oh, and you also have to defeat the evil Ganon and dig up the fragments of something rather important called the Triforce of wisdom. Loads of riddles to solve and beasties to destroy. But not to fear, this vast quest is do-able, and the great battery back-up means you can play and play and play. The only dodgy bits are the ageing sonics and slow, flick-screen movement.

The Adventure Of Link - Zelda 2
Nintendo
1 player £40



This is really Zelda I with knobs on, and although the graphics are a little bit crude, there's plenty of action and tantalising clues. Zelda II has its flaws, but there's a bit more variety than the original Zelda.

Well, that's the NES games covered, but what about the world's best hand-held? We're really ploughing through the Game Boy titles now, so just in case you missed any (or simply can't remember) here's the TOTAL team low-down.

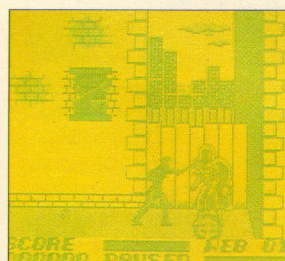
GAME BOY

★ Bleah
★★ Oh my!
★★★ Hmmmm...
★★★★ Ah-ha!
★★★★★ Yummy-scrum!

Wotcha! Y'know, it's fab-o-brill just sitting here in the quiet, looking at all these wicked Game Boy games without having dweeb-head Dyer farting about!

The Amazing Spiderman

Sunsoft
1 player £25



Ol' Spidey's back in town, and, equipped with his web fluid, he's determined to get his long-time squeeze Mary Jane back from the grasp of the evil Venom. Lots of web throwing and beat 'em up sequences make this a good fun game, especially if you're a Spidey fan. Sadly, it's spoilt by the awkward control method.

★★★

Balloon Kid

Sunsoft
1 player £25



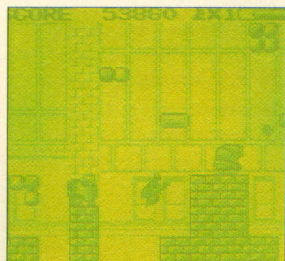
Up, up and away! A cutesy little adventure involving a balloon chase (er... what?). Alice has to rescue her dippy bruv who has drifted off attached to the end of a string

of balloons. Typical boy, eh? A bit simple but excellent style – perfect Game Boy material!

★★★★

Batman

Sunsoft
1 player £25

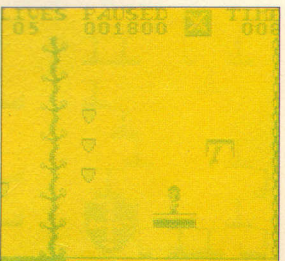


Old Bruce Wayne must be the only man in town who can strut down the street in a pair of rubber underpants and *still* look 'ard. And 'ardness is what's needed here, as this game is a tricky platform jump 'n' shoot 'em up requiring quick reflexes and a fast trigger finger. Excellent stereo soundtrack!

★★★★

Bill And Ted's Excellent Game Boy Adventure

Sunsoft
1 player £25



OK, most bodacious gamers, we strongly recommend you rush straight to your local game shop and buy this excellent pak! Agreed, there's not much Bill and Tedness here, but who cares? This is a well-tricky, completely-fabby platform adventure!

★★★★★

Boulder Dash

Sunsoft
1 player £25

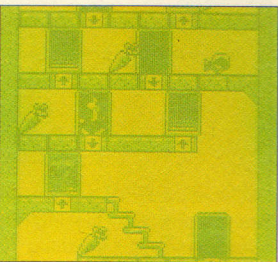


A cracking version of this popular collect 'em up. Lots of tough screens and well-designed difficulty levels keep things interesting, plus there's some superb graphics. Watch out for those boulders though!

★★★★★

Bugs Bunny

Kemco
1 player £20



Honey Bunny (Bugs's gal) is being held prisoner, and Bugs must collect all the carrots on the 80 levels in order to rescue his furry girl friend (yes, I know it doesn't make sense but we'll carry on anyway). The graphics are fine, but the game is dull. Sorry Bugs!

★★

Castlevania Adventure

Konami
1 player £25

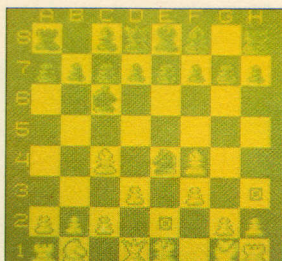


Garlic, crucifixes, wooden stakes and whip-happy trigger-fingers at the ready folks, it's vampire-hunting time! Gorgeous graphics and sprite animation coupled with detailed backdrops and inventive character design make this a visual treat. There are plenty of very nice stereo soundtracks too! A lack of re-start points and a very hard quest makes this a frustrating challenge, but Castlevania Adventure is still high in the hack 'em up stakes. (Stakes? Geddit? Oh, suit yourselves.)

★★★★★

The Chess Master

Software Toolworks
1-2 players (Deleted)

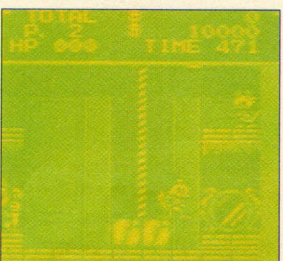


If you enjoy the odd game of chess, then this is the opponent you've always wanted. He's polite, well-spoken (literally!) and plays a mean game. Well, several mean games. In fact, there's almost nothing more you could want from a chess game. You can change the board set-up, alter the graphic style and fiddle with the difficulty setting. You can even get the game to teach you how to play! If you don't enjoy chess, this won't change your mind, but it's great for chess addicts – and it's cheaper than a lot of the chess computers you can buy, too!

★★★★★

Duck Tales

Nintendo
1 player £25



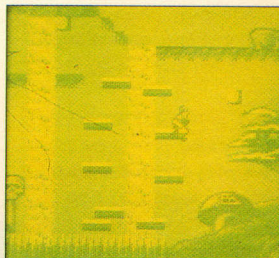
Why pay the earth for NES Duck Tales, when you can play a better version of it on the

Game Boy for less? Once again, Scrooge McDuck goes treasure hunting through five different regions. Not only is it a tougher challenge, but the control method is better too! Scrooge not only waddles and jumps, he can also pogo like some crazy punk duck! Duck Tales is a snazzy little explore 'n' collect 'em up.

★★★★★

Dragon's Lair

Sunsoft
1 player £25

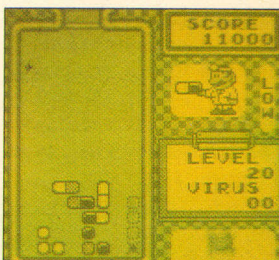


Perhaps some of the best Game Boy graphics you'll ever see are on this brilliant little game, which is more of a puzzler than a platformer. As in the arcade version, Dirk the Daring must rescue the Princess Daphne, collecting the 194 pieces of Life Stone as he goes. Extremely hard but dead playable nonetheless.

★★★★★

Dr Mario

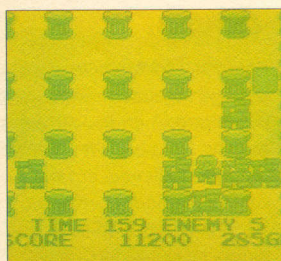
Nintendo
1-2 players £20



Forget the Super Mario connection – he's only there in name alone. This is a Tetris clone in which a white-coated, stethoscope-wielding Mario throws tablets into a jar full of germs. You have to line up the different colours (well, shades of grey) with the colour-coded germs in order to destroy them. It's quite entertaining at first, but as the levels (and there are 60) get harder, they just get more and more tedious to complete. It just doesn't have the long-term playability.

★★★

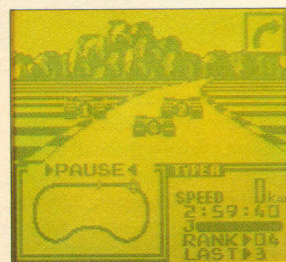
Dyna Blaster
Nintendo/Hudson soft
1-2 players £25



A spanky new rendition of a million-year-old classic. Run around the maze, drop bombs, avoid the baddies, all that sort of stuff. It probably sounds deathly dull, but with four games in one cart (including a brilliant two-player game), it offers terrific value for money. Stop reading, go and buy it!

★★★★★

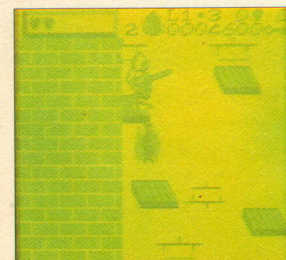
F-1 Race
Nintendo
1-4 players (with Four Player Adapter) £30



Get your motor running and carry on where Nigel Mansell left off. Loads of courses, the possibility of four-player link-up and fast graphics make this a real cracker. The action is supersonic! You can almost see smoke billowing from your Game Boy as you engage a turbo. A real speed demon!

★★★★★

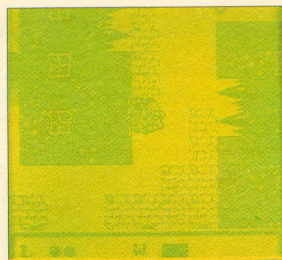
Fortress Of fear
Acclaim/Rare
1 player £20



Yet another installment of Acclaim's Wizards And Warriors series, but this time in the shape of a platform collect 'em up. Fortress Of Fear plays like a cross between Double Dragon and something with platforms in. Unfortunately, the massive quest doesn't have passwords, otherwise it would be fab.

★★★★★

Gargoyle's Quest
Sunsoft
1 player £25



Our resident dim-wit Thick found this a tad taxing on the old grey matter. As well as some nifty jumping-and-blasting gameplay, there's a role-playing element here, so you have to use your brain a bit too. Still, if you're not scared of variety, demanding gameplay and a huge quest, this could be for you!

★★★

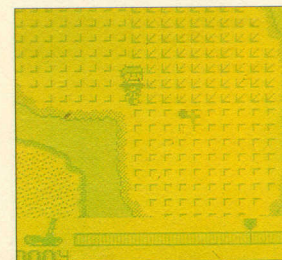
Gauntlet 2
Nintendo
1-2 players £20



Ooops! This may be a neat copy of the coin-op and NES versions, but frankly that's about it! Why? Well, for starters, there's far too little screen area for all the maze trudging that has to be done, leaving you a bit disoriented. There's also lots of empty space, making for a very dull time indeed. Without the zappy colour of the coin-op, the whole thing feels pretty pointless really.

★★

Golf
Nintendo
1-2 players £20

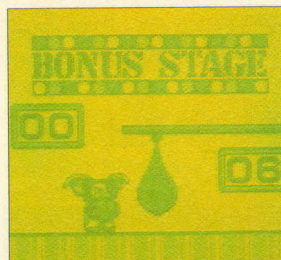


Everyone likes to play a round now and again, and Golf contains no fewer than 36 holes to negotiate. Everything you could ask for is here, including a two-player link-up option and a brilliant battery back-up so you can stop for tee

(groan). Golf is an essential purchase for fans of the sport, and an excellent bargaining tool for anyone trying to talk their Dad into buying a Game Boy. Why? 'Cos he'll love it, that's why!

★★★★★

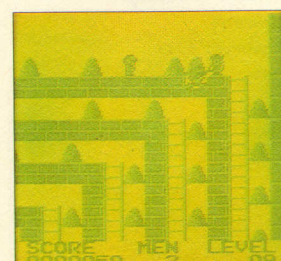
Gremlins 2
Sunsoft
1 player £25



Gizmo's up to his furry armpits in trouble again! He's been having midnight feasts and the gremlins are back to cause havoc and mayhem. Mogwai to the rescue! The game takes place across scrolly levels where Giz' uses all sorts of weird power-ups to defeat the greenies. The backdrops are nicely detailed and the gameplay enjoyable.

★★★★

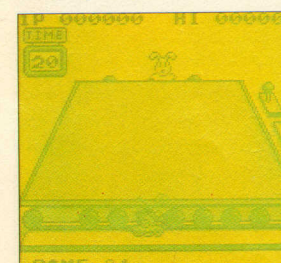
Hyper Lode Runner
Nintendo
1-2 players £25



Are you constantly looking for a real challenge. Something that will keep you up into the small hours? Well, this is one of the toughest Game Boy titles you could ever wish to meet. It's a re-vamped platformer from yonks ago, in which you collect piles of gold. This is a vicious test of reflexes and brainpower – dare you take up the challenge?

★★★★

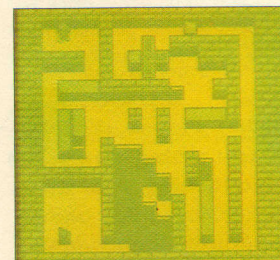
King Of The Zoo
Nintendo
1-2 players £20



This wacky ball-rolling bash 'em up is an entertaining little romp with cute looks (hilariously animated) and jolly sounds. It all seems straightforward but the high playability level is bound to lead to sleepless nights! If only the two-player link-up option was just a little bit better.

★★★

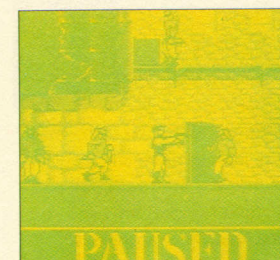
Kwirk
Acclaim
1-2 players £20



Tomato ketchup fans, this is the game you've been waiting for! Guide Kwirk, a small (but perfectly formed) tomato to the exit in a series of simple, but increasingly-complicated mazes. There are two game styles, two different graphic modes and a stupidly jolly soundtrack. A highly challenging puzzle game which will keep you battling away for weeks on end.

★★★★

Navy Seals
Ocean
1 player £25



This mission is a run along and shoot 'em up, with a bit of leaping around platforms. Big characters and smart-looking backdrops make it stand out from the crowd, and the mindless blasting gameplay is good enough.

★★★★

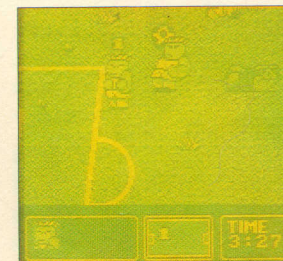
Nemesis
Konami
1 player £25



You may know this one by the name of Gradius, but whatever you call it, this is a wonderful shoot 'em up. The brilliant backdrops slide across the screen while you do your best to stay in one piece through a barrage of alien fire! The coin-op original is the one which started the power-up craze and so there's plenty of opportunity to tool up with some serious weaponry. The levels are all varied in visuals and attackers, and there are hosts of evil guardians to defeat. If you're a zapper fan, you should add this to your Game Boy collection immediately!

★★★★★

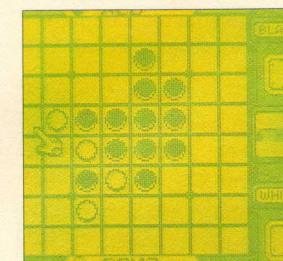
Nintendo World Cup
Nintendo
1-2 players £20



Er, Gazza may be no oil painting, but these footy players look really weird. For starters, the England line-up resembles a hippo's XI. And the opposition is just as bad, fielding a team of Clive Andersons! Even the pitches (complete with rocks and clumps of grass to trip over) lead you to the conclusion that this is more odd-ball than football. Real footy fans should have a go at Kick Off instead.

★★★

Othello
Nintendo
1-2 players £20



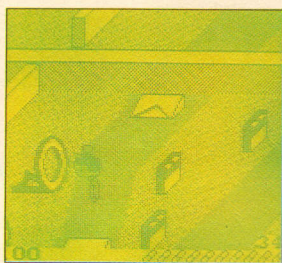
Fans of Othello need never plead for partners – this cart has four players inside. It also comes with a two-player mode which doesn't require any link-up. The rules are horribly simple – but there's no room to explain here, so just take our word for it, this game is a thousand-year-old classic, which will keep you coming back for more.

★★★★★

Paperboy

Nintendo

1-2 players £20



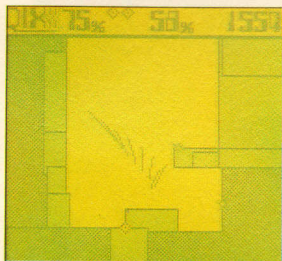
As a paperboy with major hassles you have to dodge angry customers, whirlwinds, and loony skateboarders. Sounds tricky? Well to start with it is, but the gameplay soon gets tedious. This is short-term arcade fun really.

★★★★

Qix

Nintendo

1-2 players £20



Only SJ can remember this steam-operated coin-op from his youth, but he tells us that this Game Boy version is a faithful reproduction of the original. An inventive reaction-puzzler, you must employ the old brain cells in attempt to guide a trail-blazing ship-thing around – filling up the screen as it goes. Weird, but well worth a look.

★★★★

Radar Mission

Nintendo

1-2 players £20



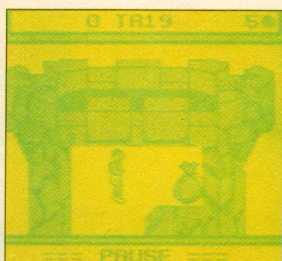
There's really not much you can say about this apart from it's a Game Boy version of that old pen 'n' paper war game, Battleships. Against a human opponent, sinking ships can be quite entertaining, but against a Game Boy it's dull. Even the zapped-up action game is a bit snooze-worthy. Purely for Battleship devotees.

★★

The Rescue Of Princess Blobette

Nintendo

1 player £25



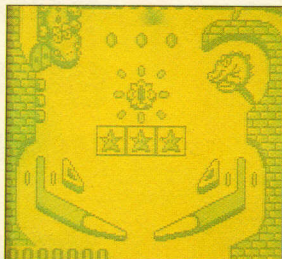
Poor old Boy and his Blob turn up again on the Game Boy and, to be honest, this is as dull as the NES version. It's about a thing that eats jelly beans to change its shape and so on, through long, action-free levels full of nothing. Dullsville.

★★

Revenge Of The Gator

HAL Laboratory Inc.

1-2 players £20



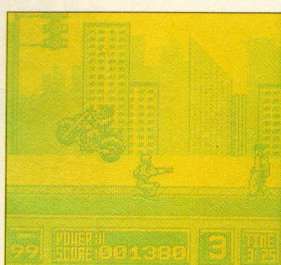
Pinball wizards won't find a better simulation than this. Ultra-smooth graphics and a whole arcade's worth of flippers and features crammed onto one four-screen 'table'. This makes an excellent Game Boy game, and although it may get a tad repetitive, pinball fans will love it.

★★★★

Robocop

Ocean

1 player £25



Robocop may be well 'ard, but he's a bit of a snail when it comes to actually moving around. Unlike in the movies, the bullets don't just bounce off, so it's annoying when your tin copper strolls around at a leisurely pace. Having said that, Robocop is entertaining enough and lays down a challenge tougher than Robo's metallic skin.

★★★

R-Type

Nintendo/Irem

1 player £20



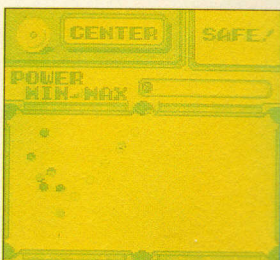
One of the all-time classic shoot 'em ups puts you in the unenviable space-shoes of a solo fighter, sent to sort out the evil Bydo empire. Blast the aliens and keep collecting the power-ups – before long your ship will be porkier than Sainsbury's bacon counter. Nothing new, but still superb!

★★★★

Side Pocket

Data East

1-2 players £25



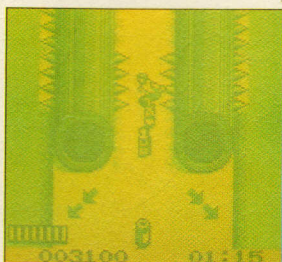
It's a pool simulation game alright, but it never actually lets you play pool. Hmm... Instead, it's more of a puzzler – setting ball-potting challenges with time limits and things. Two-player link-up is possible, and helps things no end. But as it stands, this isn't really pool – more of a puddle, really.

★★★

Skate Or Die (Bad 'n' Rad)

Konami

1 player £25



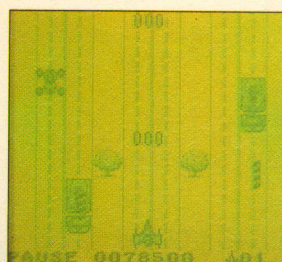
'Oh no, not that boring old NES game'. Well for once the Game Boy version is sufficiently different to the original to make it a decent game. You get a mixture of fast-paced Super Mario-style platform levels and vertical-scrolling downhill levels. Looks like Konami finally got it right!

★★★★

Solar Striker

Nintendo

1 player £20



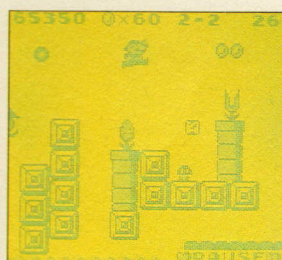
Top-to-bottom shoot 'em up scrollers don't come much more basic than this, but Solar Striker is still good fun. The graphics may look as if they've been scraped off a prehistoric cave, but don't be fooled. With loads of aliens to blast and one or two guardians to put the wind up. Give it a whirl.

★★★

Super Mario Land

Nintendo

1 player £20



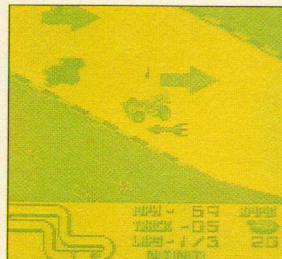
Super Mario Land is a cracking play, with all the secrets, hidden goodies, playability and sheer class of its full-size NES counterparts. There are also scrolling shooty sections and a bonus game. If you've got a Game Boy, then buy this superb platform game. And that's an order.

★★★★

Super RC Pro-Am

Nintendo/Rare

1-4 players £25



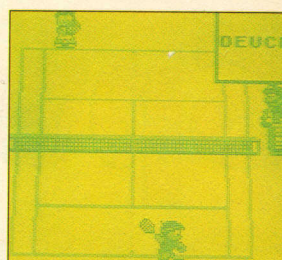
Let's get this straight: this game simulates *simulated* racing, yes? Never mind, the action is fast and furious, as your highly-maneuvrable car zips its frantic course around bends, under bridges and over jumps. Great for four players, but you do get a bit tired of seeing the same old tracks in the one-player mode.

★★★★

Tennis

Nintendo

1-2 players £20



If you enjoy tennis then this is the game pak for you. Control is just superb with a range of shots all made with a flick of the joypad. Faultless gameplay, practical graphics and two-player link up make this a game you'll play and play until you've beaten all four difficulty settings.

★★★★

Terminator 2

Nintendo

1-2 players £20



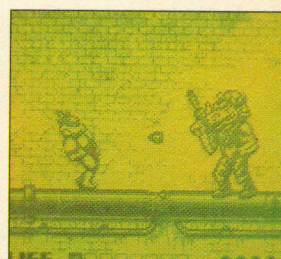
This Game Boy licence of the film takes all the best bits from the movie, cuts out all the boring bits and even puts in a few snippets the film makers left out! A good long-term challenge with some spiffy graphics. Pity all film tie-ins aren't as good as this!

★★★★

Turtles - Fall Of The Foot Clan

Konami

1 player £25



Glorious looking game with BIG sprites that move really well. Luckily for Turtle fans there's a cracking beat 'em up game underneath, too. An options screen allows you to play any level which spoils the element of discovery but play it properly and you'll be well and truly hooked.

★★★★

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Actually, in these three mighty volumes, there's exactly 123 pages of Game Boy and NES reviews! That's 81 games reviewed and rated! Blimey!



I reckon that in those three issues above there must be, oooh, about um, well more than 20 pages of reviews for a start!

SWOON!

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Come with me on a journey far into the future... well, Thursday April 23rd anyway. There will be rioting in the streets, governments will be toppled, and whole cities will crumble. But this is no future war we are witnessing. This is the on sale date of the next issue of TOTAL and everyone will be after a copy. Prevent a global catastrophe by filling in this form, handing it to your newsagent and shouting 'I refuse to witness earth's destruction'.

NEXT MONTH

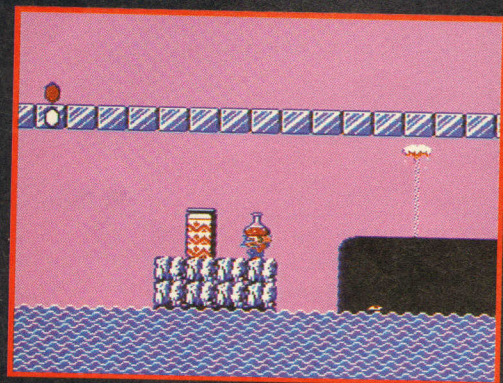
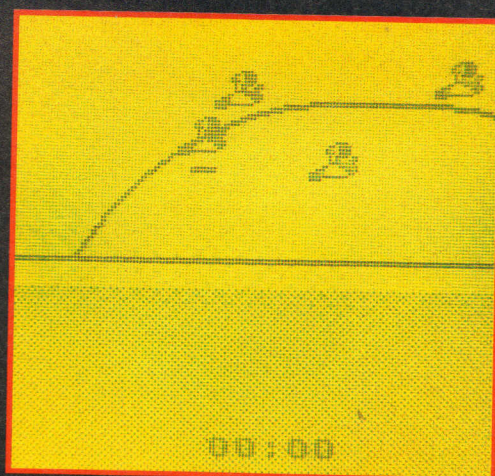
Yo! It's Wicked, it's Mega, it's happenin', it's kickin', it's bitchin', it's w... sorry? What's in it? Erm... well... quite a bit really. Cop a load of this lot!

On the Game Boy

We'll have the full review of the amazing Kick Off from Anco as well as reviews of Robocop 2, Turrican, Faceball 2000, Castlevania II and Asteroids. **Wowzer!**

On the NES

At long last we review Super Mario Brothers 2 along with, New Zealand Story, Rainbow Islands, Blaster Master, The Hunt For Red October and Jackie Chan's Kung Fu. **Yowzer!**



On the Super NES

To coincide with the official UK launch of the SNES we'll be reviewing the first batch of titles. What are they? Well there's Pilotwings, F-Zero, Sim City, Super Tennis and Super Soccer. **Um... Trouser!**

WIN 1 OF

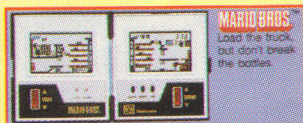
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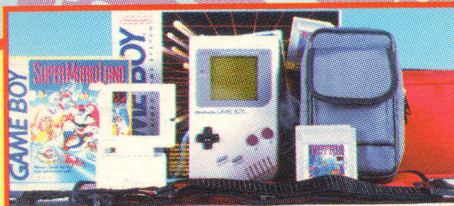
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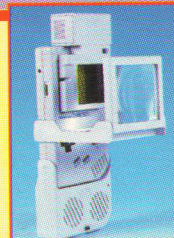
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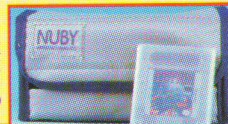
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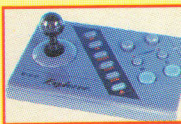
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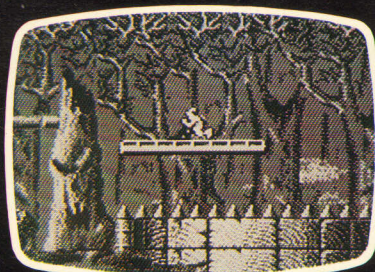
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